



ARNOLD BENNETT IN 1927

THE JOURNALS

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OF

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ARNOLD BENNETT

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1921-1928

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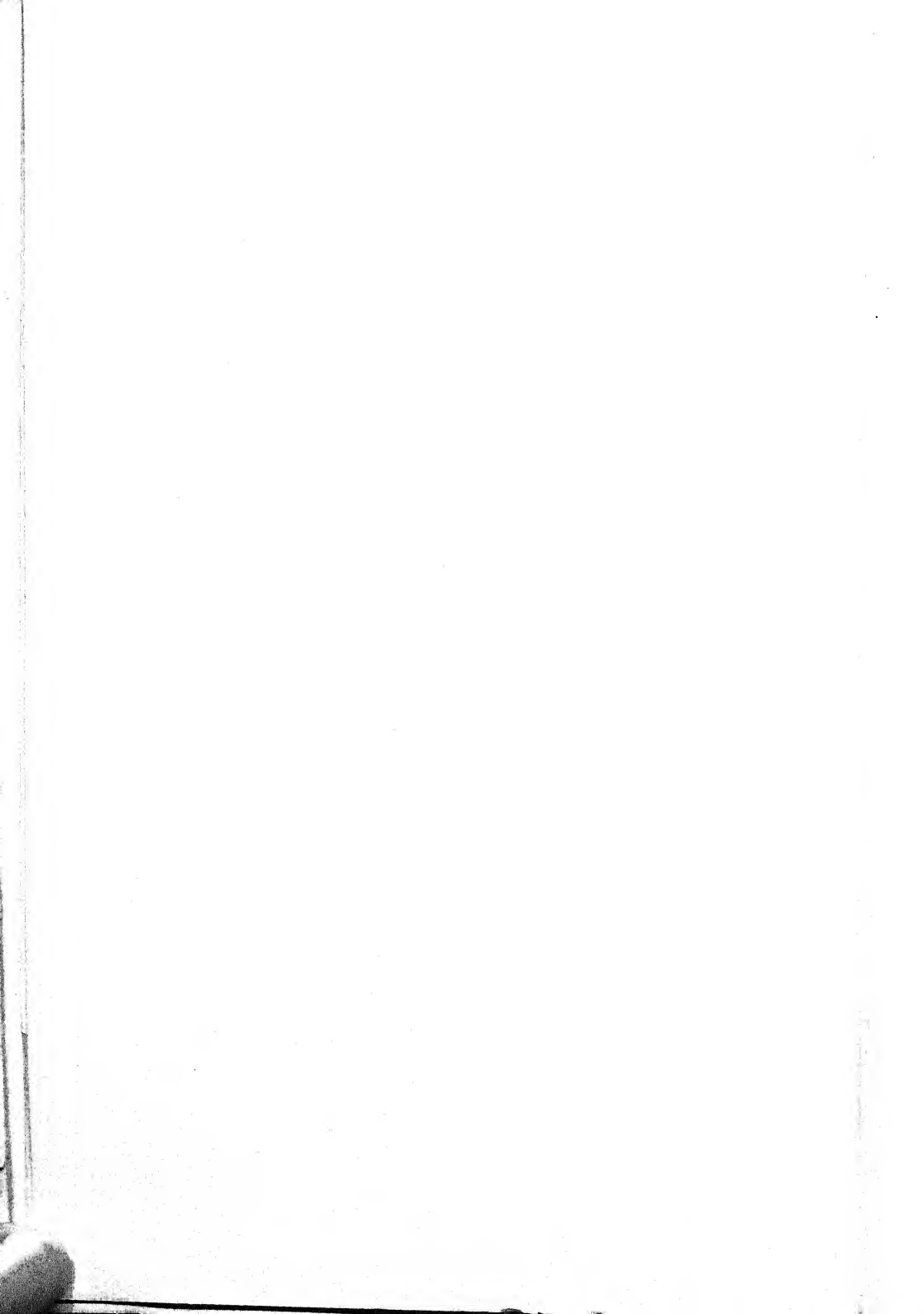
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1921

Yacht Amaryllis, Nice, Saturday, December 3rd.

I arrived here on Wednesday morn 11.1 to join Bertie S.¹ on his yacht. Magnificent morning. Cloudy afternoon. Continuous rain on Thursday and Friday. Gradually clearing to-day with some sunshine, and rather warmer.

"La Tosca" last night. Theatre, very ugly, full of provincial people and Americans. The bulk of the French women fat and plain. Also the same for the chorus in the opera. The story of "La Tosca" childish and made more childish by the 'production'. Excessive ugliness of the 1st act *décor*, church scene. Also of last act, top of tower, with the ridiculous sky border and side pieces. 2nd Act (Palazzo Farnese) not much better. Crucifix on back wall, placed there *à propos des bottes*, but you knew that it would be used before the end of the act, and it was, to put by body of murdered Scarpia. The childishness of the thing positively revolting. The 3 principal parts well sung. Scarpia (Vigneau), Floria Tosca (Brunlet) and Cavaradossi (Lapelleterie). The last a preposterous figure as a painter in 1st act. His painting of the picture very funny. Music very and consistently clever, and some parts of it beautiful. Full theatre. Casino on a vast scale. Few cocottes and those poor. The 'dancing' (the French phrase now) *très triste*. Few couples, and dowdy. But everything very well managed. The provinciality of audience the most striking thing.

This afternoon we went into the Jetée Promenade. Another casino on a vast scale. Dancing there was better: but no

¹ Herbert Sullivan, nephew of the composer.

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chic. True, the season has barely commenced. Views of town as we drove after lunch in search of cigars very imposing and fine. I was really impressed in the warm evening air. Double rows of trees in electric light, etc.

Amaryllis, Nice, Sunday, December 4th.

I began to write "Lilian" at 3.30 this afternoon, having walked about most of the morning. Sea-front, Jardin Public, food at the Café of the Casino Municipal, home exhausted—collecting and arranging ideas. The Riviera is not a place that I can walk in without fatigue. The others drove over to Beaulieu. I wrote partly in saloon and partly in my cabin, and had done 1,200 words as the clock struck 7.

Lovely sunshine this morning. Cloud and some rain this afternoon. At 9 p.m. stroll round into Jetée Promenade with Biron and home by Place Masséna. A warm night.

This morning I found that while the new town was very Sunday, commerce seemed to be proceeding very busily in the old town. At Jetée to-night a lower middle-class crowd, not too full. Immense blaze of electricity. The Casino Municipal was brilliantly lighted and doubtless a packed crowd within; but deserted without. Not a soul sitting on the *terrasse* of the great café.

Amaryllis, Nice, Tuesday, December 6th.

3,300 words of "Lilian" in 3 days.

In the portico of an imposing building on the quay to-day I saw a notice to tenants of which the following were some of the items:—not to empty dust-pans out of the windows; not to strike matches on the walls; not to put obstructive matter down the w.c.'s. As a fact nearly all buildings are imposing. At a little distance this one looks like swagger flats. It was of course inhabited by poor tenants. Some of them perhaps one- or two-roomers.

There has been a re-naming of streets and Squares in Nice. Avenue de la Gare is now de la Victoire. There is a Roi Albert Ier and a Guynemer, etc., etc.

Amaryllis, Nice, Wednesday, December 7th.

Last night at the opera "Les Huguenots", with Gramer (tenor—not bad) and Gellay (soprano—bad)—the worst operatic per-

formance I think I ever saw. It showed up the marvellous absurdity of the operatic convention. Female hags, really and visibly old, in chorus; also men nearly as ugly and equally wooden. The ballet comic in its puerility and ugliness. Many principals in the cast of course. Tenor good, but a putrid actor and a *fat* of the worst description in his self-complacency. Groupings idiotic. Orchestra bad. Intonation 75% bad. The thing left the audience very indifferent except for a few high notes.

It is wonderful how in these performances some individual will be found to cry 'Bravo' at any imitation, however feeble, of a showy thing. This happened at the end of a *pas seul* of the most mediocre sort. When a song pleases at all, the *pleased* at Nice will begin to applaud before it is over. The theatre itself, showy in an old-fashioned conventional sense. 3 tiers of boxes, or apparently boxes, with the royal box occupying 2 tiers in the centre—like the Costanzi at Rome. Usual decorations. Heaps of room for orchestra. The auditorium and audience were like the performers and the performance. Seen 1000 miles off they would look like the real thing.

Provinciality of Nice at this season passes description. I couldn't make out a single well dressed woman, and very very few either young or pretty. The dowdiness in general was dreadful. We left after Act 3 and walked home. It was a pleasant change to-day to go to Monte Carlo. By motor bus, very luxurious. 8 francs inside and 6 out. 50 minutes lovely ride. Marvellous weather. Few on the terrace before lunch. One or two ogling *grues*, and a few really well dressed women. Marvellous sunset for 30 minutes. Then dark. A very agreeable day. 600 words before starting.

Amaryllis, Nice, Thursday, December 8th.

1,400 words to-day.

The clock of the church opposite our stern strikes the hours twice, the second time about 2 minutes after the first. I suppose the people have to be reminded that the hour actually *has* struck and that time is not standing still. Detail characteristic of the regional failings.

Amaryllis, Nice, Tuesday, December 13th.

I finished 10,200 words (the first part of the novel—there are to

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be 4 parts) on Sunday at 6.30 p.m. having written them in one week and 3 hours, I wrote 2,400 words on Sunday.

I dined Martin (Bertie's Spanish friend) at Maxim's last night. We then went to see Polaire in Nozière's "Marie Gazelle" at the Trianon Casino (usually a cinema, I think, but originally a theatre). A mediocre play, but magnificent acting by Polaire, really exceptional. The house was full, or nearly. In spite of beginning at 8.45 instead of 8.30 and of very long entr'actes to enable the *boule* and the *baccarat* to function, the thing was over at 11.40. We had meant to paint the town red, but as we could not begin this job till 1 a.m. at the earliest and there was nothing to do in the meantime, we decided to go home.

In this town, which is not large, there are 4 theatres that give opera or operette (the 2 municipal theatres, the *Jetée* and the *Renaissance*). There is the theatre we went to last night. There are several music-halls, including the vast and dingy *Eldorado*, which must hold quite 4,000 people, and, I think, 13 cinemas. The bulk of these places are supported by the population and not by visitors. You see visitors only at the Municipal theatre and the *Jetée*. Sundry, if not most of them, have large gaming-rooms. The population is certainly fond of pleasure. The architecture is good, dignified, in a good tradition—even the newest buildings. There are book shops.

At the same time, as I was walking home the other night from "Carmen", I passed a big house in the Rue Cassini where the *vidangeurs* were at work. Several huge cylindrical carts. No *hose* and *pump*; the excreta was carried in pails from the fosse through the courtyard, and the men mounted to the tops of the cart-cylinders by a movable staircase. The floor of the courtyard was splashed with excreta. I thought that the performance of "Carmen" was not at all bad (certainly the best operatic performance I had seen here). *Bourgeois* as *Carmen* was too old, but she was slim and acted excellently. Nevertheless the show was hissed several times, and on Monday morning the *Petit Niçois* gave it and *Bourgeois* a brutal notice. Till then I had thought that the papers praised everything local.

Amaryllis, Cannes, Thursday, December 15th.

We left Nice at 9.40 and reached here at 3.30 on Tuesday. Cold and rough. Housekeeper and steward both ill. Lunch at 3.45. But the boat behaved well. I had a headache yesterday. No

work. Work resumed to-day. Much Casino yesterday. Learnt a little about chemin de fer. Last night at Casino, dancing only during entr'actes of theatre. Great dowdy theatrical crowd watching a few of us dancing. The melancholy of the great hall at 3 p.m. before the afternoon concert starts is terrific. They keep *boule* going all day whether anyone is playing or not.

Amaryllis, Cannes, Friday, December 16th.

I began 2nd part of "Lilian" yesterday afternoon. I played chemin de fer after dinner under Bertie's tuition and lost 200 francs. At the table there were more women than men. Two lovely women came in later to another table. The status of some of these women is mysterious. They do nothing but play, and if they are cocottes they must do their business very slowly. If not cocottes they must be *femmes entretenues*, or very near it. But a number of them are too old to be *femmes entretenues*, though perhaps not too old to be cocottes. Gamblers are very ingenious. They believe in such things as the effectiveness of a *faux tirage*, of *cartes fait exprès* to change the luck. They constantly talk of how near they were to winning a large sum—if only the bank had won one more time; etc. As if they were not always very near to making a large sum, and that the nearness of the big win was not the very essence of the charm of gambling.

Amaryllis, Cannes, Sunday, December 18th.

I am still writing over 1,000 words a day of my novel. I worked all day, and stayed at the Casino till 11 p.m. and actually took 10 francs off the *boule* tables. Lovely weather. Yesterday, white flannels for the first time. Also flower in button hole. There are millions of carnations. It is singular the number of people with a strong instinct to pretend to think that what they have or do is really done. They will deceive themselves for days, and they thirst for laudation in secret which they do not accept at its face value. Then, in a few days they suddenly declare the truth. Strange that last night at the tables there was scarcely a cocotte. The band seemed to have withdrawn altogether for a night.

Amaryllis, Cannes, Tuesday, December 20th.

I wrote nearly 2,000 words on Sunday and was so exhausted

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that yesterday I did nothing except correspondence. No reflection.

Amaryllis, Cannes, Monday, December 26th.

On Saturday I finished the second part of "Lilian", having written nearly 23,000 words in less than 3 weeks. A good performance, having regard to the amount of gaiety accomplished at the same time. I danced every day, sometimes twice a day. "Denise" on Friday with Miss Aitken. Very old fashioned and very dull, with a few very good scenes of *raisonnement*. The sentimentality of the last act brought the house down several times; it must be this that keeps the play alive. For Réveillon we dined with the Patrick Warrens at the Beau Site—a really charming free and easy family. I danced at the hotel all the evening; then gave a supper including two of the Warrens at the Casino.

Bertie lunched us at the Réserve on Christmas Day. Ideal. He also dined us at the Casino, a rather showy dinner. He gave us the Pol Roger Goût Américain 1911 that Warren had introduced me to the previous evening, and of which we had 4 bottles at my supper. Rather sweet, but a marvellous wine. Warren said he drank it every night. Fine dancing after the dinner by the pros and semi-pros and cocottes. One of the officials of the Casino, if not two, sat at the same table as three cocottes. Tale of a cocotte who got into debt of 700,000 francs at the Casino, went off for a few days, and returned with the money. How?

The band that plays on the Croisette is the most *petit bourgeois* thing you ever saw. Chiefly middle-aged and old men. Townsmen. No string instruments. Dirty old music of the French al-fresco concert variety—and never straying out of the accepted convention. Round about the Casino through various windows in the morning you can see rehearsals of various things to be done. Opera. Choruses. Band, etc.

Joel's yacht *Eileen* came in the other day and left this morning for Naples with the family on board. His display of deck electricity is very showy, as at Deauville; but it is a great yacht. The *Lorna* came and left. *Finlandia*, *La Résolue*, and *Sita* (a very old Rothschild yacht) are now here, and next to them—us. Splendid weather most of the time; but damned cold sometimes in the morning. Still, no overcoat required to

go across to the Casino on Xmas night. Still reading, slowly, "The Brothers Karamazov".

Amaryllis, Monte Carlo, Tuesday, December 27th.

Yesterday lunched with Sholto Johnstone Douglas and wife at Hotel Bristol, Cannes, to meet Jean de Reszke and wife. De R. is 71, fat, but looks decidedly younger. When he came in he said "Ah! Vous voilà enfin. Ma femme ne parle que de vous. Elle vous lit toujours," etc., in a teasing tone. He acts and relates and makes jokes the whole time. Full of life. Delightful with children. Pleasantly *rosse*. His wife, Breton, aged nearly 60, slim as a girl, beautifully dressed in black. Full of *chic*. Very beautiful even now. *Rêveuse, sentimentale, pessimiste* (through having lost her son in the war, I think). Quite enchanting. Her admiration for my novels made her nervous and shy. Ditto me. But we got on excellently. Afternoon, tea party given by old Mrs. Aitken (Max's mother) at Casino. Me the only guest. Dined on yacht. Then a dance at the Hotel Bristol given by Mrs. Douglas, Elinor Glyn and a Mrs. Robertson. Room too small, dancers too numerous. A lot of us left early in consequence. But a few stuck and had a good time in diminished company till 2 a.m. Finished at Casino and saw a lot of people and some high play. We left Cannes this morning at 9 sharp. A perfect day except no wind. Engineer proved himself finally and eternally a hopeless fool. He messed up both the starboard and the port engines in the end. We sailed an hour or two, and entered the harbour here under one engine at about 4 p.m. having taken 7 hours for about 20 miles.

Amaryllis, Monaco, Thursday, December 29th.

The Casino and the private rooms both dingier than ever, and the crowd also looks dingier. The Sportsman's Club is much smarter and its crowd smarter. Its decoration is horrible but costly. Bar-Restaurant.

Amaryllis, Monaco, Friday, December 30th.

Monaco *ville* yesterday morning. I walked through most of the old narrow streets, some completely arched over—all with dark stone stairways—some marble. The place built for summer, not winter. Some streets can get no sun whatever.

Dinner with Hyde Kennard at the Sporting Club. I got

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my ticket and paid 50 frs. for it. Then to the play-rooms. Scarcely any young women; but a certain air of social distinction about all the groups. The whole lot very ingenuous. Roulette, baccarat, chemin de fer, and trente quarante were played.

Amaryllis, Monaco, Saturday, December 31st.

Lunched with Biron at the Sporting Club. I began Part III of "Lilian" in the afternoon and wrote 800 words. Then to the Sporting Club, where there was more gambling. Lady S. believed that there existed a small number of people who played regularly, daily, very carefully, for small sums, and regularly won small profits—sufficient to pay their hotel bills. They left off when they had made 'quite a little'. She told of a friend who *always* made, every year, at least £60 out of the Casino. But the champion tale was Mrs. Pilcer's, about the Germans. Before the war the Germans gambled here, but not like the French in the true gambling spirit. They left the tables when they had won—not when they had lost. They all did this. Of course it was very German and marvellous of them. Matters got to such a point that the Casino authorities said that if the Germans continued to come, and to play in that way, the Casino would have to shut down. Mrs. Pilcer apparently quite believed all this story. As it is the sort of thing that leaves you speechless, I said nothing but 'How interesting!' Which indeed it was. Mistralish wind, but sunshiny.

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Amaryllis, Monaco, Sunday, January 1st.

Worked yesterday morning, and strolled about the town with Biron. Night, ballets at the Casino Theatre. More gold on the interior of this theatre than I ever saw in any other theatre. Two ballets: "L'Idole aux yeux verts", by I forget whom. Utterly roth rate in design, scenery, choreography, music, dancing and everything. The second, "Hamlet", *divertissement* by A. Thomas, had some goodish tunes in it, and a more classical feel, and the *première*, though a 2nd rate dancer, had grace and charm. So it went down well. All the attendants at the theatre wear steel chains round their necks. Afterwards Bertie and Mdme Raquet played in the rooms and both lost. We took Madame R. on board and went to the Sporting Club, where Winston Churchill was playing chemin de fer and losing. Afterwards he played baccarat at a table at which Vagliano the Greek shipowner offered open bank.

Amaryllis, Monte Carlo, Monday, January 2nd.

Great sunshine. Too tired to work, I went on to the Terrace to think, and the first person I met was the Mrs. B. with whom I had arranged to dance this afternoon. Shortish, slim, pretty, *bien habillée*. She had a dog. She said her husband went to early service while she took care of the dog, and she went later while he took care of the dog. This vaguely disturbed me. I rashly said in talk that I never went to church. Did I believe in a Supreme Being? Yes. Did I believe in the divinity of Christ? No. Did I believe in the Bible? Parts of it. How could I only believe in parts of the Bible? And so on, showing the most dreadful crudities of thought, accompanied of course by absolute certainty of being right. She was soon telling me that once one believed that the English were the Ten Lost Tribes then the whole Bible became perfectly clear, and one could

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see that all its prophecies had been or were being fulfilled. Further, that the second coming of our Lord was expected about 1935, and then the Jews had better look out for themselves, and there would be a thousand years of peace. Thirdly, that all the great historic dates of the world had been engraved long in advance in a secret place beneath the Great Pyramid, and they were all correct. They could be seen by anyone who understood how to read them. . . . She tried to get me to church with her (room at Grand Hotel). However, I shall dance with her.

Amaryllis, Monte Carlo, Sunday, January 8th.

At night, I was invited by Mrs. X. to dine at Ciro's. A good, nicely-decorated, *chic* restaurant and food good, but the dinner was awful. The hostesses, Lady Y., Lady Z., and Mrs. X. All covered with jewels, chiefly pearls. In addition, a niece of Lady Z.'s, a Miss S., younger and more stylish, with whom I danced. The men I didn't know, except Ian Macpherson and a youngster named Shaughnessy. The whole company acutely dull, conventional, and ignorant. We broke up at 9.30 for gambling, but Ian and I went to Oreste's. This was one of my outstandingly 'hellish dinners'. I couldn't get anything out of anyone except Ian. They couldn't see jokes, and knew nothing real of either politics or the arts. Still, Ciro's is a good place. The Grande Duchesse X. came in after dinner with her maid-of-honour. Apparently notorious. Tall, slim, straight (damnable ugly), dressed in white, and a good dancer. Aged about 60, I should say. Danced with her godson (really her son) who had come in with two cocottes, and other young men. Maid in black, sat alone. After we had been at Oreste's about half an hour the maid came in and took a table and sat gloomy and solitary, and then the Grande Duchesse came in, quite bright and agreeable to the maid, and danced with more young men. The maid, a nice-looking mournful girl of about 30, did not dance—did nothing. The Grande Duchesse seemed to me to have bits of a Romanoff face. Her being in these places reminded me of Princess Philippe de Bourbon at Cannes frequenting hotel dances. *Quel changement.*

Amaryllis, Monte Carlo, Monday, January 9th.

No novel yesterday. Saturday night I had danced so much and heard so much jazz band—the tunes ran through my head in bed and I danced in bed—simple fatigue.

Amaryllis, Monte Carlo, Tuesday, January 10th.

After fiddling about fruitlessly in search of little bits of mechanics, I wrote the whole scene in the afternoon, about 1,400 words, in spite of a headache due to too much exercise in the morning. Grande Duchesse, with maid, was there again, and I was much relieved to see the maid, dressed in black, and sad to match, dance twice. I was told also that on the Sunday night the Grande Duchesse stood half-bottles of champagne to the professional *danseuses*. The resort is run on exactly the right lines. There is freedom combined with *tendue*, and the manners of the *danseuses* are perfect of their kind.

Amaryllis, Monte Carlo, Wednesday, January 11th.

No luck with engineers on this yacht. The new young one from England was returned as hopelessly incompetent on Tuesday. He was seasick in harbour and knew nothing of the engines or the dynamo. He was put ashore on Monday night. Although ill up to the time of going there, as soon as he knew he was to sleep ashore, he bucked up, shaved, and made himself spruce. He did not turn up to report yesterday morning. The skipper went to fetch him. Said the skipper afterwards: "There he was, having his lunch, among ladies with furs, and him with a knife and fork and a *serviette*. I soon pulled him out of that." It was the *serviette* that upset the skipper. Relating the thing to me, after he had told Bertie, the skipper added: "Now if it had been *me* it would have been different."

1,500 words yesterday. I called on Baroness Orczy according to promise, and found a villa stuffed up with furniture, and her husband's pictures. But all of them very decent agreeable people. I stopped an hour—nothing notable in the talk.

Amaryllis, Nice, Friday, January 12th.

Wednesday morning last dancing lesson from Pauline. I gave a dance tea at the Park Palace, having written 1,000 words. Yesterday we left Monaco harbour at 9.30. In about an hour the new engineer was seasick and the engines had to be stopped. Scarcely any wind. We made Nice, instead of Cannes, at 2.30, the engineer having recovered sufficiently to bring us to our berth. That done, he left, saying he had had enough of the sea, and we are now stranded again.

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Amaryllis, Cannes, Sunday, January 15th.

Friday night, *dîner de gala* at the Negresco. Bertie, Mme. Raquet, Miss Foster and me. The room rather good. The mayor of Nice, who was also a *sénateur*, died on Thursday morning, and there was no music at the casino in the afternoon. Madame Raquet gave her opinion that there would continue to be no music so long as the mayor was "*lying down*". This is about the best piece of Anglo-French I ever heard.

This morning I finished Part III of "*Lilian*" though distracted from my ideas by the news (1) that Olive Valentine was engaged, and (2) Dunlop shares were to fall still lower.

Amaryllis, Cannes, Wednesday, January 17th.

I finished the third part of "*Lilian*" on Sunday morning. This leaves me less than 6,000 words to write. On Monday I did no work and yesterday I did little but reflect upon the novel. I finished Matthews's "*Life of Christ*" on Monday morning. It was worth reading. I was specially struck by the cumulative force of the Sermon on the Mount.

Amaryllis, Cannes, Saturday, January 21st.

I began the 4th and last part of "*Lilian*" yesterday and wrote 1,600 words. Old Cecil Quinton the yacht-racer, and original owner of the *Cicely* (now *Lamorna*), came to lunch with his wife. He said that the *Cicely* once did 17 knots with 2 patent logs—"and *they* didn't help her much". He also told tales of an old illiterate captain whom he took ashore to watch over a flat in Buckingham St. and who in a storm would 'stow' all the crockery etc., affirming that the house was rolling. Also he sat in his room with only a small blue jet of gas-light. Asked why he didn't have it higher, he said because he had noticed that when he blew out the gas at full there was much more smell than when he blew it out from a little point. He had been blowing out the gas nightly for weeks. Old Quinton is 70 odd and was racing in the eighteen-seventies.

On Wednesday night and last night Laura Aitken came down to dance with me. Last night Bonar Law came and joined us for a few minutes, showing all his usual extraordinary charm. He said that for 12 months he had been perfectly happy to be idle, but during the last month idleness had begun to bore him. Half

an hour later he made the mistake of introducing me to Lady Z.
Quelle femme !

Amaryllis, Cannes, Friday, January 27th.

I finished writing "Lilian" on Tuesday last at 10 a.m. Since then, as usual after these feasts, I have been ill, chiefly in bed.

Amaryllis, Cannes, Saturday, February 4th.

Since I finished "Lilian", *rien*. Persistent chill and cough, which practically disappeared yesterday. Very wet weather, followed by high W. and N.W. winds. Nothing much doing. I took my ticket to-day for London for Tuesday next. My play "The Love Match" produced at Folkestone last Monday. I did half a water-colour on Wednesday but couldn't finish on account of fatigue and approaching sunset.

Read H. G. Wells's "Bealby". Amusing, but I don't yet (50 pp. from the end) see the moral basis of it.

Amaryllis, Cannes, Tuesday, February 7th.

I calculated the other night that the big table (50 louis départ) took 2,900 frs. every ten minutes, and therefore that it must make about £140,000 in the season. Some other people told us that the Casino calculated to make an average of 30 louis per day out of each person who played. A bank manager here told us that a number of rich men (including Guggenheim) started to play at 2 a.m. with total resources of probably about 5,000,000 frs. They played till 7 a.m. when each person announced that he had practically no money left beyond a few thousand francs. It had all gone into the *cagnotte*. And of course if you play long enough all the money must eventually reach the *cagnotte*. The percentage is probably much bigger than at roulette or 30-40. This is the last day of my holiday. I leave by the 2.16 p.m. de luxe.

1923

Ciro's Club, Saturday, September 29th.

A waiter brought me a card. It was Mrs. H. P.'s. I went over to her. She said she had beautiful musical evenings. I said I hated musical evenings. She said they weren't really musical evenings but general affairs, with dancing, but fine music. She knows a lot of people, including Austin Clarke, an Irish poet, who she said had annoyed all Ireland by his truthfulness (I think). She quoted from him, "O Irish girls, are you as dirty as the holy water you dip your fingers in?" "Or something like that," she added. Also an officer on *The Quest* expedition.¹ I objected to highbrows. She said there were now no highbrows in Chelsea. I said the King's Road was a solid mass of them. She asked me to ask her to dance and I did so. During the dance, she asked me if she looked well (before this she had asked me to pay her compliments. "We women always want them"), and referred to her sojourn in a sanatorium (lungs). She said she was now practically cured. She said "Do you know what I live on now?"

"Eggs and milk?"

"No."

"Stout perhaps?"

"No. Love." At this point she put her cheek on my breast and 'snuggled'. She said she was happiest when men were in love with her, several at a time. As three men were at that moment, I said: "But can you love them all at once." "Oh!" she said, "My love isn't like theirs. Mine's mental love." I said: "What about H.?" (Her husband.) "Does he make love to you?" She said that H. never did and that H. said that husbands and wives never did that now. (Quite serious in her recital of all this.) An outrageous woman.—"You must come and see me," she said. "I shall be delighted to," I said.

¹ Sir Ernest Shackleton's last Antarctic expedition.

Savoy Dinner, given by the Savoy to a few journalists and Sassoon and me, to introduce (privately) the new "Savoy Orpheans" the wonder-band. Temple in chair (as publicity manager) and Blumenfeld on his left. Talking about Hannen Swaffer, Blum said he was very clever and had been in Blum's employ on the *Express* about twenty years ago; but Blum had sacked him because he wore blue undershirts. He sat down to the table to write and exposed his blue undershirt to the wrists, and Blum stood it as long as he could and then sacked him. Probably quite untrue, but Blum told it very well. The Orpheans are about twelve in number and for the most part play strange instruments all looking like silver and gold. The piano has two manuals with a harpsichord attachment. Black trumpets—Conductor a Britisher. (No doubt to smooth things over with the Ministry of Labour who always object to importations of labour.) They played bad music well. "You see the man the second from the right," said Temple, "that's Count G., the finest saxophone player in the world. Nine out of ten people won't know he isn't an ordinary fine player, but the tenth will, and the tenth will make the fortune of our band, which has been collected from all over the world. You see that thing under Count G.'s chair. It's a bird-cage. There's a canary in it. He left the bird in New York. It fretted. He cabled for it. It is the only canary that has crossed the Atlantic alone. Count G. gets £83 a week. The band costs between £430 and £460 a week." (I had guessed £200 a week.)

Sunday, September 30th.

William Hale White, "Mark Rutherford."

When Fisher Unwin sent me the new uniform edition of Mark Rutherford (uniform only in size and binding) the other day, I began to read the volumes and kept on, beginning a new one straight on after the previous one, like Anthony Trollope wrote his novels. I said some years ago that his prose was almost the finest modern prose.

I still think his prose is generally very fine, but it is rather untutored: he is not safe from bad grammar, or from indefensible phrasing. Also he makes his characters talk wonderful prose, even the lower middle-class characters. His characters are chiefly lower-middle class, and upper labouring or artisan class, with a sprinkling of professionals. They are chiefly dis-

senters and atheists. The atheists are the sheep, and the dissenters the goats. His places are small towns or large villages in the Eastern midlands, and sometimes the inner lower-class suburbs of London—Clerkenwell, Brondesbury, etc. His interests as a novelist are chiefly spiritual and intellectual, that is, strictly religious and philosophical. He explains his characters' 'views' usually before anything else. And they argue with each other at length. The sisters Hopgood argue with astounding skill in beautiful sentences, using a vast vocabulary. He simply cannot construct. "The Revolution in Tanner's Lane" is the worst example of this, (perhaps his best novel). It is really two separate novels, joined by a mere accident of relationship between a girl in one and a girl in the other. There is no sign of the revolution in Tanner's Lane until nearly the end of the novel. I think that he must have constructed as he went along. "Clara Hopgood" is not about Clara Hopgood at all, but about her sister Madge Hopgood, and Clara is only dragged in at the end. Throughout Madge is the principal character. (Cf. "Rhoda Fleming", which is really a novel about Dahlia Fleming.)

He is fond of sudden deaths, generally caused by chills following on getting wet through. Also he seems to get tired of a story and compresses the important part towards the end into a page or two. He can be sily amusing. Thus (beginning of "Catherine Furze"): The Bell Inn's "handsome balcony on the 1st floor, from which Tory county candidates, during election times, addressed free and independent electors and cattle." (He had referred to the cattle pens, a permanent feature of the market-place and high street.) Also (same place) about "half a dozen old skulls" found in a gravel pit. "As it was impossible to be sure if they were Christian they could not be put in consecrated ground; they were therefore included in an auction of dead and live stock, and were bought by the doctor." There is quite a lot of this kind of thing imbedded in the sombre narratives. He is always getting new, original wisdom, observations on life, character, manners. The love interest is always there, but seldom the chief interest. He deeply understands and knows small dissenting provincial communities, and such things as free-thought political clubs.

He always moves his plot on by means of pure accidents—often by flood and field, sometimes by people forgetting some-

thing and turning back; also by death or narrow escape from death. In fact his incident-invention is childish—and hasty. There are two deaths from consumption in "Catherine Furze": one of his best books if not his best. Also he is too hard on his unsympathetic characters. The conversion of Orkid Joe in "Furze" is comic in its wording. Some of his wordings seem to show that he does after all believe in orthodox Christianity, despite his gibes at professing Christians and his sympathy for atheists.

His best contributions to literature are his spiritual stimulation, and his singular wisdom about the conduct of life. All his books are full of both.

Lunch to Mrs. W. Randolph Hearst. (Really given Mrs. W. R. H. and arranged by Ray Long, editor of the Hearst monthlies.) I was the star guest. On the left of the hostess-guest was A. S. M. Hutchinson, and G. K. Chesterton was at the other end of the table, at right hand of Mrs. Young, a travelling friend of Mrs. Hearst's. This arrangement irked me, but the lunch was a great lark, and I enjoyed it. Mrs. Hearst very pretty, even beautiful and well preserved. She had a 'down' on film-stars. She wanted me to go and stay on their ranch and said they had 30 miles of Pacific coast of their own. Among those present were W. L. George, Rebecca West, Michael Arlen, Edmund Dulac, Phillips Oppenheim, and C. G. Norris, (brother of Frank Norris) wondrously shirted and necktied, and his wife Kathleen who sat next to me, and carried on with me a spirited flirtatious conversation.

Alhambra, Saturday, October 6th.

Richard and I went to see Rastelli, juggler, Italian. Very good. But a shade monotonous in invention. He did some of the Cinquevalli tricks, with a soft ball, not a hard. One of his best was juggling with two balls by his head alone. His finest thing was juggling with eight discs (not for long) while doing something with his head—I forget what.

Griffiths Brothers with a horse now, not a donkey, were side-splitting. So was Potter, a "comedian".

Apathy of audience to all the good things. Applause, but not enough.

Slow motion film of Carpentier v. Beckett. Very impressive.

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Like doom. Sort of inevitability. Beckett slowly falling. The towel floating into the ring, etc.

Gloominess of Alhambra and stodginess of audience compared to my recollection of 1889. Yet probably no real difference.

When one gets intimate with a woman she generally makes assertions about herself to show that she is not like other women. A man seldom tries to show that he is not like other men.

Friday, October 12th.

Tania said, discussing her new repertoire: "The Chopin Mazurkas are patriotic. The Polonaises are political. I shall play them in a political manner."

Newman Flower told me that C. K. Shorter went down to see Hardy and asked to inspect his manuscripts, which were stacked in boxes in an attic. Having inspected them C. K. S. said: "I'll have the lot bound for you." Hardy agreed. The manuscripts were bound but very cheaply and badly indeed. Before sending them back C. K. S. wrote: "I think you said you'd give me two manuscripts." Hardy kicked at this but agreed to give him one—"The Return of the Native".

Thursday, December 27th.

Kingsway Theatre. "Twelfth Night." When I took my friends into box, there was not a soul in the stalls; two people came in half-way through 1st act. Handfuls of people in other parts of the house. The first effect was pathetic. The comic actors had a tendency to hurry. This went off. Excellent performance. Audience very appreciative. I enjoyed it more than the other two performances which I had seen. Then we went behind to Dorothy Cheston's¹ room, and heard about things.

¹ This is the first reference in Arnold Bennett's Journals to Miss Dorothy Cheston, who was to be so closely associated with him during the remaining years of his life. He went to Liverpool to see his play "Body and Soul" performed by the Liverpool Repertory Company; which included Miss Viola Lyell, and Miss Dorothy Cheston, who played the leading parts. Their friendship strengthened as time passed, and later they came together. Although he was unable to get his freedom in order to marry her, their relationship was generally and openly accepted, and their domestic and social life differed in no respect from what it would have done had a legal ceremony been possible. In 1926 she became the mother of his daughter Virginia Mary, before whose birth she had changed her name by deed-poll to Dorothy Bennett.

At first they said "We'll just run through it." But D. said "A. B.'s in the house." "That's *someone* to play to anyhow," said Viola Tree. At one point Viola Tree slipped into her part in "Midsummer Night's Dream", but slipped out again. The whole performance was very good. The thing was caused through the most amateurish advertising. The troupe *had* to laugh. Dorothy Cheston went off quite merrily with Pat Warren and Richard to the Savoy for a bite of supper. I came home with Claude Warren and put her and her bag into a taxi for Paddington. She would arrive at Henley 1.17. *Quelle vie!* Curious that D. C. seemed to see nothing queer in the statement that the company decided to play up because *I* was there.

Friday, December 28th.

Dinner given by V. C. at the Farmers' Club. A sort of official world. Lionel Earle, an Irish judge, Gen. Brancker, a fellow named Blair at American Embassy (who had carefully lost all his American accent, and who remembers a description of mine of the 20th Century Ltd. train in "Your United States"), a new M.P. (name forgotten), etc. Admirable meal. Oysters Mornay to start with. Roederer, 1906; a fine brandy. Most of them drank more than was quite necessary to sustain life. I was the chief guest. On my right S. L., who praised much Lady C. Said she had *not* got a shallow mind. Usual sign of being in love. Said she had had eleven children, many dead. I said her husband ought to be ashamed, and asked if he was a Catholic? "Oh no. Quite the reverse. He was very angry with me because I took her to a midnight mass. . . . I said he might call me out if he liked." Evidently serious, then.

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Tuesday, January 1st.

Chelsea Arts Club Fancy Dress Ball last night with Dorothy. Seemed to be fairly well organised on the whole, though it was impossible to get supper without standing in a crush on stairs for a very long time. The supper was free. The light refreshments downstairs were not free. Still, one got them. All boxes occupied. 3 or 4 thousand people I should think. Beauty of building. Commonness and poverty of most of the costumes. I was disappointed too in the female beauty. Orchestra goodish. Processions and stunts rather poor. Fantastic noises. Some drunks. I saw few friends or acquaintances. On the whole a mediocre show, I was glad to get away (1.20 a.m.). My chauffeur seemed to me to be a much superior person to most of the revellers. In fact it struck me as being somewhat under-civilised, below the standard set by ordinary standard conventions of style, and rather studio-ish.

Wednesday, January 2nd.

Yesterday New Year's Day. Begun in alleged gaiety till nearly 2 a.m. A bad night. No work—Exhaustion. Listlessness. A few New Year resolutions lying about in odd corners of mind. Perhaps only two. To read more and to 'go out' less: i.e. to possess oneself more.

Dined at Ethel and Nan's; goodish dinner. Not a trace of New Year's resolutions. Raymond Mortimer and *les précieux*, but with an active and vigorous mind. George Moore came in after dinner, and sat on Mortimer considerably about French novels.

Friday, January 4th.

Yesterday, highbrow tea at Ethel's. Logan Pearsall Smith and L. H. Myers (the author of "The Orissers") and young Marjorie Madan and me the guests. Myers is a thin dark man, *silencieux*,

un peu précieux, but apparently of a benevolent mind. Certainly a highbrow; L. P. Smith also. L. P. S. started the affair by saying that he had been asked by a publisher to make a list of 23 books of *permanent* value published in the 20th century. He read us the list, and several times amiably altered it according to our criticisms. He had no use for Hardy, and I had little for H. James. Then we went on to make a similar list of French books, and it was not nearly so good. This tea was a real success.

I was the first to leave at 7.5. I hurried home and went on to a dinner at Sinclair Lewis's timed for 8 o'clock. It began at 8.30 long after the 4 guests had arrived. Present a young quiet English sort-of-journalist named Belgion and Sir George Maclaren-Browne (British representative of the C.P.R.) and Lady D. K. These two were fine. The talk at the end of the dinner went to old C.P.R. days, and the careers of the famous Van Hoorn and Jim Hill. Lewis thought of it as an idea for a novel: what I should say it was. Lewis has a habit of breaking into a discussion with long pieces of imaginary conversation between imaginary or real people of the place and period under discussion. Goodish, but too long, with accents, manner, and all complete. He will do this in any discussion; he will drag in a performance, usually full of oaths and blasphemy. A most striking contrast between the dinner and the tea. The latter all bookishness and what is called, I believe, culture. The former all life and scarcely any bookishness or culture at all.

Lewis soon began to call me 'Arnold', and, once begun, he called me 'Arnold' about 100 times. He has things to learn, but I like him. He showed me the first typescript of his new novel—all blue and red with millions of alterations,—a terrible sight.

Saturday, January 5th.

Last night, "Peter Pan", Adelphi. One kid said (I was told by M.): "Oh mother, Peter Pan's grown up." This play wears excellently well. But it isn't about P. P. and not growing up, it's all about the mother-theme, with which Barrie must have been greatly preoccupied when he wrote it. The real mother dominates the first and last acts (in particular, last scene but two and last scene but one). In the other acts Wendy plays at being a mother and P. P. at being a father. Everyone wants to be mothered—even Smee—except the braves and some of the

pirates. The play is simply all mothering. Even the dog is a mother-nurse. It is full of the most charming fancy and invention, and often very true to life.

Wednesday, January 9th.

A snowstorm, with howling wind, last night and through the night. I walked home from D.'s. Feeling of exhilaration, despite conditions. I looked out once or twice during the night. Snow falling. This morning same. Scraping of spades of cleaners of pavements rather exhilarating. I suppose this exhilaration may be due partly to the increased light due to the snow. But one has the same exhilaration from a very thick fog, especially if one has to go out in it. Sensation of difficulties to be conquered, no doubt. Snow is now (10.30 a.m.) beginning again, and I have to get to Cheapside? Will exhilaration continue?

The Bone families (James and Muirhead) asked me to lunch with them at the "Fish Ordinary" at Simpson's in Cheapside. While we were chatting before the meal a waiter came along and protested: "You've missed Grace." We had. An old gentleman was in the chair, and he had risen and said grace. (He said grace at the end, and we listened respectfully then.) The point of this Fish Ordinary (which is said to take place four times a week) is that at the end a big Cheshire cheese is brought on, and served round (by the Chairman) and after he has done this, the company, each member of it, guesses the height, girth, and weight of the cheese. If any one succeeds in all three, champagne and cigars are served all round, the winner gets a printed certificate of winning, and 'his name is put in the papers'. No one guessed either 1, 2, or 3 to-day. I was miles out.

At the end the Chairman has to tell a story, humorous. This old man comes gratis to each "ordinary" at present as the proprietor is ill. He carves each course if it has to be carved. There was hare soup, cod with oyster sauce, sole, whitebait, jam roll, and cheese. All was fine except the whitebait—a bit soft. Then you sign your names in the book, with 'remarks' if any. At the end the old chairman, hearing that we were the *Manchester Guardian* lot, came and spoke to us and expressed his pleasure, he being an old printer. All this was mightily quaint. All highly old-world. Low ceiling; second floor. It seems to have established itself in 1723. The different rooms have names,

'King's Room', 'Queen's Room', etc. A bar or small lounge on ground floor. Many habitual 'frequenters' about. As far as I could learn the cheese had only been fully guessed, in 100 years, about 15 times; but 3 times in the last 10 years. Waiters very nice, but firm withal. They told us that cheesemongers came specially to guess, but were never anywhere near right in all three.

James Bone said that he took Don Marquis, the American writer, there and introduced him to the real chairman (now ill) as an American from New York, whereupon the chairman said he was particularly glad to meet him as in his opinion America was our finest colony. Bone related this for a fact, implying that the Chairman had not yet heard of the Independence of U.S.A.

Bone and wife had been staying with Joseph Conrad. They said that he said about "Riceyman Steps", "It has always been Bennett militant; but this is Bennett victorious."

Saturday, January 12th.

I went yesterday morning to a smallish second-hand furniture shop (authentic antiques) in Basil Street. A tall gentleman in charge and alone there. He apologised for a certain untidiness, and said that his partner was even more untidy than he was himself. I didn't see the partner but I guess that there was no love lost between them. A tall man, conventionally dressed, tail coat, striped trousers. Perfect manners. Evidently a gentleman. He gave a twinge, and apologised, in moving some furniture. Said it was rheumatism, caught in Bolshevik Russia. Man probably about 45-48. Biggish nose. In moving some more furniture, he let a cut glass jug slip off a table, but I caught it as it fell. When I said I should have to think over a proposed purchase as I wasn't sure if I liked it, he said eagerly: "Certainly, I should not care for you to buy anything and regret it afterwards." Just before I left, a very tall young man and a biggish boy came in, and he told them to go into his office. Both stylish. "My sons," he said to me, concealing his pride. This place was a good illustration of the invasion of trade by the educated and well-bred classes.

Another instance I had the other day at Gereth's in Beauchamp Place, where the middle-aged lady boss was a most charming woman. Another is the "Cottars Market", run by Mrs. Pitt Chatham and Mrs. Playfair. All these three close together.

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Tuesday, January 15th.

Yesterday afternoon I suddenly decided that I couldn't proceed with my story about Elsie until I had been up to Clerkenwell again. So at 4.50 I got a taxi and went up Myddleton Square. Just before turning to the left into this Square I saw a blaze of light with the sacred name of Lyons at the top in fire, far higher than anything else; also a cinema sign, etc., making a glaring centre of pleasure. I said, surely that can't be the Angel, Islington, and I hoped that it might be some centre that I had never heard of or didn't know of. Certainly its sudden appearance over roofs was very dramatic. However, the old chauffeur said of course it was Islington. Rather a disappointment.

Myddleton Sq. with its Norman windows of its 4-storey houses, and church nearly in middle, with clock damnably striking the quarters, was very romantic. I had to correct several of my memories of the architecture. I walked round the Square gazing, and going up to front-doors and examining door plates and making notes under gas lamps (very damp and chilly) while the taxi followed me slowly in the mud. Then I drove up to the Angel and saw that it had truly been conquered and annexed by the Lyons ideals. Still, it was doing good up in Islington, much good. Compare its brightness and space to the old Angel's dark stuffiness. Then I drove to Dr. Griffin's to get information about the organisation of the life of panel doctors. I got home at 6.30 and I had been in other worlds, though less than two hours away in all.

Wednesday, January 16th.

Lunched yesterday at Thesiger's to meet Princess Marie Louise (daughter of Princess Christian). She married a Prince Albert of Anhalt, lived in Germany nine years, then got a separation. A woman of 51, dressed in mourning for her mother. Everyone called her 'ma'am' or 'madam' in every sentence, except me, and the women curtsied to her, and Thesiger said the only thing insisted on was that he should meet her at the door when she came.

Her lady-in-waiting, Miss Hawkes, was there too. Marie Louise kissed her heartily when they met. Seemed a fairly sensible woman and pretty wise. Said nothing in particular but said it neatly, used of course to deference, which she received in

plenty, though Thesiger teased her the whole time. Still, I was glad I had not been effusive when she wrote to me about the Queen's Doll's House twice, as I might have got dragged into St. James's Palace, which I should have hated, I know.

Thursday, January 17th.

Last night. First night of "Havoc", Haymarket. Two fair acts (2 and 3) in which were only men, and two other acts (1 and 4) dominated by women and a conventional West End actor, namely Henry Kendall. Enormous applause all through, numberless curtains, speeches, and yet I can't see how this play can run. War acts fairly realistic in details and solidities, but not in their main actions; so realistic in detail as to be unpleasant to me; not beautiful. The other acts putrid. Frances Carson useful as a sort of "Queenie Paulle". I was disgusted with the stage. Mrs. Leslie Faber (her husband the star of the night) applauding like anything and she and a few others keeping the applause alive when it ought to have been dead. A beautiful and charming, ingenuous woman; she looked better last night even than usual.

Friday, January 18th.

Emerging last night with Duff Tayler from Garrick. A very damp and chilly night—"struck through you". Stopped by a fairly well-dressed man of fifty or so. A woman with him walked on. She was very soberly dressed. Too dark to see properly. "Excuse me speaking to you, but are you a member of the Garrick." "I am," etc. (Duff left the talk to me.) "I hope you won't be angry," etc. "Needless to say that if you're a member of the Garrick, you're a gentleman. You won't be angry. You're looking very serious."

"I'm a serious man."

"You're an author or something."

"No, I'm just a man."

"But all you Garrick fellows are celebrities of some sort. . . ? Now that lady there is my wife. She is my wife. We're in a deuce of a hole. Really in a hole. I'm a friend of W. B. Maxwell. You know him? Now if he was in this club, it would be all right. But he isn't. I'm a gentleman. Public school man. My brother is a General at Cardiff, that is to say, he's really a Brigadier-General. Willie Maxwell will tell you. I must intro-

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duce her to you " (making a move, which I discouraged). Many more prefatory remarks, and me getting colder and colder, and Duff putting in a word or two now and then. " Now if you could oblige me with a little—just until the bank opens to-morrow morning. Give me your name and I'll leave the money for you in an envelope to-morrow. I'm a gentleman. You can trust me. . . ? Otherwise my wife and I are in for a night out."

" I'm afraid I can't do that," said I. He didn't seem very disappointed.

Strange how these people can hope for success in cadging. He probably haunted the entrance to the Garrick all the evening. Duff said that his object in wanting to introduce his wife to me was to get hold of my name. The man had a weather-worn face. Spoke quite well, and was undoubtedly what is known as a gentleman. It was a hell of a nasty night, though not actually raining at the moment. The wife was waiting about 100 yards up the street. I could see she was dressed in brown. A most deplorable case, the case of this man.

Saturday, January 19th.

Talking to Harry Higgins¹ Thursday night about the possible rent of the Vienna opera. He said that *he* was quite willing to let them have Covent Garden, and that the difficulty would be with the permits from the Labour Ministry. He said that in old days the orchestral players were utterly unscrupulous about sending deputies to rehearsals, and that he had to keep a special man to stop players from signing the attendance book and then rushing off somewhere else to another engagement. That Augustus Harris used to have as many as twenty absentees for one rehearsal. He said that Harris was robbed probably more than any other theatrical manager.

Harris used to be in the silk trade. Men would bring him silks to look at, and he would examine with a glass, very professionally, and say: " Finest quality", etc., and buy. But when the silks were wanted for costumes, etc., they could never be found. Higgins said that these thieves would have a van waiting at the other side of the theatre to take away what Harris had bought. Doubtless some poetical licence. Duff Tayler said: " But *did* Harris *really* know anything about silk." " Oh yes, he knew

¹ Chairman of the Grand Opera Syndicates.

about silks, but he didn't know how to keep them when he'd got them."

Saturday, February 2nd.

Yesterday, lunch at Savoy with Reeves Smith, Rupert Carte, Thornewill and Temple. They showed me over the hotel.

The waiters' tips are put in a *tronc*, and divided each week into *parts* (French word). Some men get a little over 1 *part*, and some as low as $\frac{1}{8}$ th of a *part*. A *part* may mean £8 or £10 a week. It appears that if any waiter is cheating he can usually be detected, by the law of averages. The waiters have their own clerical work done; but it is checked by the hotel, 'to see fair play'. The maître d'hôtel takes no share in the tips. In the credit department, I found that all mistakes on the wrong side, in bills, if waiters' fault, have to be paid by the waiters.

I heard that the Savoy alone took in receipts a total of a million a year, about £3,000 a day.

Chambermaids keep their own tips individually. Ditto valets. Valets do a business in clothes-pressing, etc. The charges for these go on the hotel bills, but the money goes to the valets. Door-porters pool their tips.

Tale of the head of the cloak-room; been there for ages; remembers people's faces, often without troubling as to their names. He took an overcoat from an old gentleman, and gave it back to him at the end without a word.

Guest: How did you know that this is mine?

Employee: I don't know, sir.

Guest: Then why do you give it to me?

Employee: Because you gave it to me, sir.

Kitchen. Head Chef under thirty. Worked his way up. Wore a natty little white cravat without collar. Stores. Fish in tanks. The man who calls out the orders as they come down is called the *aboyeur*. I didn't see a great deal of special interest in the kitchens, except the patent washer-up.

Power station. Artesian wells. Geared turbines. Power for carpet-sweepers, pumping, etc., etc. The Power station looked like the stoke-hold, rather, of the *Lusitania*. Run by oil now. Ventilated by vast draughts of cold air through trumpet-like things. Water heaters for both.

Graph Office. (*Capt. Jack*.) Graphs for various receipts. In

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summer receipts for rooms go up, and restaurant receipts go down. Londoners away in summer. Hence there are two publics. The travelling, and the home publics—very distinct.

Audit Dept. Every bill separately checked—but afterwards. Every query on them has to be cleared up.

Printing Office. All menus, cards, programmes, and large bills. In their spare time they do the hotel's commercial printing (such as order forms).

Repairs department. I didn't see this. But they plan all their big carpets there. However, I saw through a window in the side-street the room where 10 to 12 women repair the hotel linen every day.

Laundry. Clapham. I didn't see it. An American expert said it was undoubtedly the finest equipped laundry in the world.

Bedroom and suites. 6 guineas a day for double bed and sitting-room, bath, etc. 9 guineas for two bedrooms and sitting-room. It pleases visitors best that the rooms should be if anything too warm when shown. Thornewill had given orders previous night that one suite should not be let, so that I might see it at my ease.

Sunday, February 3rd.

On Friday Denison Ross produced a theory that all art sprang from the contemplation of the veining of marble. He spoke also of pictures in fires and in clouds and said how much these were superior to human early efforts (he knew this last was rot). He referred to the celebrated ugly marble in grill room of Holborn Restaurant, called the 'Gorgonzola'. He said he had seen in this a great battle, and he was sure it represented the great battle in which the Gorgons overthrew the Zola system.

Monday, February 4th.

Yesterday, walking on Thames Embankment near Grosvenor Road, met Sidney Webb and wife. Beautiful morning. They were quite happy strolling along. Of course I stopped them. I said to Sidney, "Well, how do you like things?" (meaning the first Labour Government, being in the Cabinet, etc.). He said, "Oh, I think it's a jolly lark." Then they asked me rather anxiously what I thought of the Cabinet—that was their first question—and my answer pleased them. Discussed various individuals. Told me how people were impressed by the really

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business-like qualities of the new ministers. I said, "Evidently they are business-like—the praise is quite justified." "Well," said Mrs. Webb as they left, "they *do* work. You see they've no silly pleasures." I said, "I hope they have; I hope they have!" She wouldn't have it. And as they walked off Sidney said, about 'silly pleasures', "And here she is taking me out for a constitutional." Evidently he didn't like that. Clearly these two are never tired of their job. And they have no pleasures except their job, and no distractions except perhaps reading novels.

Tuesday, February 5th.

I finished "Lucien Leuwen" on Sunday. Two pictures of society, at Nancy, and in Paris. At Nancy, military, social, political, passionate. At Paris, political, social, flirtatious. It develops really into a political novel, and Lucien's excursion to Caen and another place to influence elections on behalf of a minister makes the Paris half provincial again. It must be one of the best and truest political novels. And as regards the local aspects of national politics (intrigues of prefect, etc., and those for or against him) it must be about as true to-day as it was in 1830. The whole thing is almost savagely ironic. All very fine. This is Jean de Mitty's edition (1901) '*reconstitué sur les manuscrits originaux*'. Highly serious that one chapter, and that one of the most important—(Lucien's return to Nancy to see his worshipped Bathilde de Chasteller, who he thinks has had a child)—is entirely indecipherable in MS. and is therefore omitted. I should have thought some expert could have made out the more than usually changeful cypher or cryptogrammic form in which Mitty says the book is written and this chapter particularly.

Wednesday, February 6th.

Audrey Lucas, E. V.'s sole child, invited herself to tea yesterday. Audrey was quite changed. More self-confidence, breadth of range, and courage. She has been four months in N.Y. assisting in a children's book-shop on 53rd street. She lived by herself on 12th Street. I asked her about lonely evenings. She said, well she had to write letters and see to her clothes and go early to bed, but still some evenings, especially at the start, were lonely. Afterwards she knew more people. Now back in England permanently. I was very pleased with Audrey this time. I

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liked her as a child. Then later she left me cold, and now I like her again.

Friday, February 8th.

Last night, 1st performance of "The Way of the World" at Lyric, Hammersmith. I have seen two rehearsals and the performance of this play, and still do not know what the plot is, nor have I met anyone who does know. Further, the balance of the play is astoundingly neglected. There is a very long (and good) scene in first act preparing the entrance of Petulant, and of course preparing an audience to believe that Petulant is the chief character, whereas Petulant does nothing whatever in the play, and might, so far as the plot is concerned, be left out. The two chief characters in 1st act are not as they ought to be Mirabell and Fainall, but Petulant and Tony, the character played by Playfair (I forget his name—Sir Wilful's half brother). And so on.

The play suffers through the proper names abounding in the short 'i' vowel sound and other shorts. Mirabell, Millamant, Witwood, Wishfort, Wilful. One gets confused.

The last act drags terribly, and is enough to kill any play. It seems to me that Congreve had something of the superior and really snobbish artistic negligence of Wilde and Byron. Anyhow his play suffers. It is celebrated; but it cannot hold the stage because of its crude and inexcusable faults of construction. Were it well constructed, it would easily rival Sheridan and Goldsmith.

What liberty was allowed to unmarried girls in that period. If Millamant was not a widow—and I never understood that she was, (same for Marwood), they must have had a great deal of licence.

The performance and production last night were admirable. The play will fail, but it must add to the prestige of the theatre. Edith Evans as Millamant gave the finest comedy performance I have ever seen on the stage. I went behind afterwards, told her so. "How exciting!" she said.

Saturday, February 9th.

Last night I told Walter Roch we would go home by bus instead of taxi because it was more interesting. He agreed. We had to wait 5 minutes in Piccadilly for a 19 or 22 bus. (I took a chill here, which much impaired my night's rest.) While wait-

ing a very little oldish, spinsterish, thin, misshapen, stooping woman came slowly along, carrying two large neat parcels, strapped together, with a string handle. She was neatly dressed, polished shoes, but misshapen and queer—probably about 45. She could walk with great difficulty a few yards only, using all her might to lift the bulky double package, and then stop and rest and start again. She seemed so exhausted that I went up to her and asked her if she wanted a bus. She said "No," but I didn't think she meant it. She then said she had to get to Holborn and that 44 bus went there. I said: "You're on the wrong side of the road," and I almost picked up the package to carry it across Piccadilly for her. She said she didn't want a bus, hadn't any money. She seemed to me to be too neat and self-important and obstinate for me to offer her the fare.

Then in the bus we saw a respectable man kiss a little girl. She got out and left him.

So that we were rewarded for our bus ride.

Monday, February 11th.

Last night, Fellowship of Players performance of "Macbeth" at Strand Theatre with Beatrice Wilson and Edmund Willard as principals. Arthur Bouchier was asked to speak a few words "to begin with". Speech called for at the end. Milton made it. It ended thus: "Whatever is good in the production is the players', whatever is bad is the producers'." "No, no!" protests from stage, etc. More applause. Why will stage people do these things? God knoweth. It was all so characteristic, and so childish, and so "stagey".

Wednesday, February 13th.

Last night, performances by students (actors, actresses, orchestra and conductor all students) of two one-act operatic things at Royal College of Music. I was given a seat right at back of long, low "Parry Opera Theatre", next to the Director's chair, which remained empty for some time. Then Sir Hugh Allen bustled up in the dark. Light tweed suit and a vigorous, active air. I rather liked him. You could see he was on his own dunghill. He showed me the stage. The scenery was appalling in its infantile ugliness, and ought not to have been permitted. We were too far off to hear and see the first opera (a scene from "Martin Chuzzlewit", awfully good) and for Armstrong Gibbs's

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and A. P. Herbert's "Blue Peter" we got seats in the front row and too near. But even then the words could not be well heard owing to bad elocution. Aveling, the registrar, clutched on to me; he began on highbrows. He said the students were all perfectly mad on (what he called) highbrow music. Never talked about anything else. Evidently he resented it. I suppose he meant all the post-Brahms composers. I must say the Dickens Opera was stuffed with cleverness (D. Martin Wood, composer), not modern but damned ingenious and graceful. It really held both Duff and myself.

Saturday, February 16th.

J. B. Priestley's article on me in *London Mercury* for February. After quoting from "The Authors Craft":

"With the single exception of Turgenev the great novelists of the world, according to my standards, have either ignored technique or have failed to understand it. What an error to suppose that the finest foreign novels show a better sense of form than the finest English novels!"

He goes on himself:

"What an error indeed! The fact is, of course, that the art of fiction as practised by the great novelists *is* technique, and any other 'technique' is either some inferior method or a mere catch-phrase of the pontifical critic."

This is a bit thick. It is easy to show where very many of the great novels fail in technique ("Anna Karenina", e.g.) and where they could have been improved if the author had had the advantages of Flaubert, de Maupassant, or even Tchekoff. They are great in *spite* of carelessness, and their carelessness is often notorious. I thank heaven I have always gone in for technique. And "The Pretty Lady" and "Riceyman Steps" are both, in my opinion, jolly well constructed and *done* books.

Monday, February 18th.

At Harold Snagge's yesterday and day before. Basil Lubbock (author of "Round the Horn before the Mast") told various of his adventures in two wars and in Klondyke and as a seaman. He said, and repeated, that he had met only one or two British cowards. Practically everybody was brave in danger. He expected shell-shock, and also 'panic' affecting a number of people together.

Either he or Snagge told of some of the methods at Ford works. When the employees come in and hang up their street things, the hook is whisked up high in the air, and does not come down again till shutting-off time, so that nobody can prepare to go in advance. Also a man had been employed for some time and thought he was doing quite all right, when the manager sent for him and told him he could leave as they didn't want men like him. He asked why. "Look at these photographs," said the manager. One snapshot showed the man stooping to speak to a fellow workman as he was passing from one spot to another. The other showed him looking into a doorway which was forbidden. I should want very high wages for work in these conditions, I think.

Tuesday, February 19th.

D. and I to first night of first playing of "Back to Methuselah" last night at Court Theatre. 'House full' boards outside before the performance. I had asked for and offered to pay for seats, in order to please D., but I received an apologetic letter from the manager to say that they were *really* all gone. Afterwards a box was returned and Barry Jackson himself gave it to me; which, I thought, was rather graceful. The affair was a *solemnité*. But not quite the usual kind of 1st night. Walls of box dead black and of stone. We could see the empty orchestra, and the nakedness of Adam and Eve. Curtain going up announced by a sort of clash of a cymbal. I was very bored by the play, I could see nothing in it; neither action nor character nor a sermon nor wit. The game of finding new words played by the characters seemed silly. It was too far round to go to smoke in the interval, so we stayed in our tomb. In the second act I went to sleep and had to be wakened for fear a snore might be heard on the stage. Audience indifferent but very polite. Many calls. Play began at 8.37 and ended at about 10.15. Barry Jackson said author in house but wouldn't appear till the last night. Shaw had box over us. His programme fell down at the end and was wafted into our box. D. took it away as being historical. A most depressing night.

Friday, February 22nd.

Yesterday, lunch with Burton Chadwick, M.P. I happened to say that creative writing was in my opinion the hardest work

there is. He tried to believe me, but was genuinely startled. He said quite sincerely: "Well, you do surprise me. I always thought it was quite spontaneous—the author sat down and wrote what came into his head. . . . Well, yes. I suppose he *must* think it out a bit."

Saturday, February 23rd.

Last night. Goethe's *Faust*, Old Vic. Translated by Graham and Tristran Rawson. Nearly in full; only a few scenes shortened. 25 scenes. Elaborate. Rough. Orchestra of about 25, choruses off, etc. From the start you had an impression of grandeur in the 'spring-for-flight' of the work. It got a bit tedious in the middle, but was going very strong when I left at 11 p.m. Theatre people came into our box with visitors book for me to sign. We had box 8. Box 7 can only be entered through box 8. The underground lavatory down ruined steps between ancient walls very picturesque and primitive. Reminiscent of primitive continental lavatories. In fact comic. Large-ish audience. Very quick to laugh at the right points, and not to giggle, which ridiculous and childish exaggerated sense of the ridiculous is the curse of West End audiences. Ian S. forgot his lines as *Faust*, but was good. Hayes as the Devil very good. Jane Bacon fair as *Marguerite*. This was the 2nd performance.

Tuesday, February 26th.

First night of "Kate" (or Love will find out the way—Good God!) at Kingsway last night. It fell flat in the audience. The applause exclusively friendly applause. The thing was killed by a perfectly rotten book. The plot was unfollowable and the words terribly dull. No one that I saw in the audience thought other than that the thing was a frost. We went behind to M. Gordon's dressing-room. Full of flowers and bonbons (costly) and 2½ bottles of champagne which I was asked to open. I opened one. Completely different atmosphere. Marjorie after her great effort, needing praise and optimism, and getting them from half a dozen people. Difficult to know whether these artists really believe in a success, when any grain of common sense should tell them that the thing was bad and failed to please. A woman saying, "I'm *sure* the stalls liked it." Me saying: "Delightful, you were splendid, Marjorie." (Well, she was, but had nothing to do.) "Beautiful production," and so on. All

praise. No criticism. Not a hint as to badness of book. We go. On stairs I meet Donald C. Well, he asks me my view. I tell him I like the production (I don't—yet we are very intimate), music, performances (yes, true) I give a slight hint as to badness of book. He likes it all right. But supposing I told him book was bad enough to bust up any show. We drove homewards, Dorothy and I, and say again and again that the thing is hopeless. And in scores of cabs and autos radiating from the theatre to all points of the compass people are saying the same thing. But the artists and the aged authors of the book, are trying (not successfully) to convince themselves that the thing is a success. This is a 1st night sample of many 1st nights.

Saturday, March 1st.

Max Beaverbrook lunched with me yesterday. Asked "What about the Tory party", he said: "A. is an idiot, B. has sciatica, C. is whoremongering, and D. is taking dancing lessons."

He said he had been cured of his illnesses (whatever they were) by cutting off all fleshmeat and all wine, and that he felt perfectly well. At lunch he had nothing but an omelette *fines herbes*, boiled potatoes and carrots, and stewed fruits, and very little even of those. He kept his jacket buttoned all the time, and it was not very well cut. At 2.45 he went off to the dentist. He was extremely interesting all the time. He slyly acknowledged defeat when he came in. I had distinctly told him I wouldn't go to his place till he had been to mine again. He tried several times to worm out of it, and he told Helen Fitzgerald that he should beat me. However, in the end he yielded. It was a new experience for him.

Monday, March 3rd.

At Ciro's last night. D. seemed to have caught a chill and she complained that the hot room was very cold. "It's very draughty," said she. "I can't feel any draught at all," said I. She said: "*It's when the waiters pass.*"

Tuesday, March 4th.

Feeling well and idle yesterday morning I went out for a walk and got into the Victoria and Albert Museum. In the galleries I met Eric Maclagan, Keeper of the Sculpture, and he said: "You must come and see the finest Chinese sculpture in Eng-

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land." So I went with him into a closed gallery and saw it. 7th century (Tang). A Buddha. I said, "There is no Western Art." He entirely disagreed. He said that he thought Western painting much finer than Eastern, and the same for sculpture—but I forget his comparisons. He said we got into the way of comparing primitive Chinese with renaissance and later European, and of course we didn't see in the latter what we saw in the former.

Quantities of rotten pictures at South Kensington and many good ones. The place is close to my house and I hadn't been seriously into it for years. I went ostensibly to think about a story, but thought very little.

Wednesday, March 5th.

Yesterday afternoon Thomas Bodkin¹ called to see me. He has purchased a fine old Flemish primitive for £1,000 from a clergyman who believes it to be a Perugino. He showed me a bad photo of it—very fine. His business in London was to arrange to re-sell it, and he explained the grave difficulties attendant upon the enterprise—not being done in the eye. He had determined to give the job to Tancred Borenius to do. The picture is passed with 1st-class honours by various great experts. He said: "The man who can sell that picture properly is almost as clever as the man who painted it." He told us a number of stories about his own smaller finds (some of them of thrilling interest), and how people owning pictures who asked for his help were too stupid and too set in their own ideas to be helped.

Thursday, March 6th.

German film last night at Polytechnic Cinema. One has the idea that all films are crowded. The balcony here was not 15% full. Front row, where Duff Tayler and I were, 8s. 6d. for 1½ hours' entertainment. A gloomy place, with gloomy audience. No style or grace in them. All lower middle class or nearly so. The hall tricked out with a silly sort of an ikon, illuminated, of Death, to advertise or recall or illustrate the film. The orchestra most mediocre. Played all the time, and three performances a day! Hell for the players I should think. Also the horrid habit of illustrating certain points musically, or noisily. The clock must strike, etc. And a special *noise* as a sort of *leit motif*

¹ Trustee, subsequently Director, of the National Gallery of Ireland.

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for death. Lastly three small common Oriental mats (probably made in England) laid in front of the screen on the stage to indicate that much of the story was Oriental. The captions, etc., were appalling, and even misspelt, such as 'extention', 'Soloman' etc. The phrasing! Good God. "The City of Yesteryear" meant, I believe, the cemetery.

Monday, March 10th.

We went to 1st house (Saturday night) at Victoria Palace. As I went in a man, obviously very mediocre, was singing an absolutely banal music-hall song (as to both words and music); *awful*. Habitual applause. Curtain. He came and sang another one. House full except a few seats at both ends of 1st row of fauteuils. God! What a drab crowd! Giggling at terribly poor jokes—the women. Best seats 3s. 6d. plus tax. We were in 2nd row of fauteuils. I notice the middle-agedness of most of musicians in orchestra. Imagine going through their musical programme twice a day. But not all of them seemed gloomy and resigned. One or two seemed to have gusto. All the numbers were mediocre without being awful (except the 1st one as I entered) until Alfred Lester, whom I had gone specially to see. An air of *maitrise* at once in him, a different feeling. He was very good in a not quite mediocre sketch. But he wore a very bad wig. After him, a musical-grotesque number. We thought it might be good, but after a bit of it we left. Not good enough. Then to dinner at Queen's Restaurant, Sloane Square. More Mediocrity. Yet not wholly bad.

Tuesday, March 11th.

I lunched with Donald Calthrop yesterday. I knew the Kingsway "Kate" was a failure. He showed me the figures. He had been away for the week-end. Motoring up yesterday morning he had had an idea for a revue. He had seen that it would be better for his backer (who had written him decisively that he would finish up in three weeks) to close the theatre at once and spend what he would have lost in producing a cheap revue (no scenery).

His notion was to produce this revue in less than three weeks. True, it is not yet written. He asked me if I would edit it. So I said I would, but on the understanding that he took a month to do it in. We went through all the items he might get at

once, and the authors whom he could approach at once. The revue was to be called "Pass the Port, please" and the nature of it was that some people are dining together and instead of going out they amuse themselves, and then call up the servants to help them in amusing themselves. The servants are headed by Sidney Fairbrother, whom the backer had engaged for another three months yet at £50 a week. I said the backer hadn't yet agreed. In fact he knew nothing about it. Well, D. C. said he would see the backer that afternoon and phone me at 7 p.m. I stayed two hours nearly with him. He phoned me at 7.25 saying that the backer was very interested, and could he see me to-day. He is to lunch with me to-day, and that is how theatrical business is done.

Wednesday, March 12th.

Phillpotts's rustic comedy "The Farmer's Wife" at Court Theatre last night. This play is, really, far less naïve than the vast majority of West End society plays. Far less. The cynical wisdom of the 'hind', "Churdles Ash", is much better than that of Pinero's "Cayley Drummles". The plot is neither more nor less conventional than West End plots, while the characterisation is immensely superior. I liked most of the play. So did Dorothy. The love scene in the last act between the farmer and his servant was really beautiful. Yet I asked Herbert Griffith (*Observer*), "Do you like this play?"

"No." He certainly did not. He could see nothing in it.

I asked George Mair (*Evening Standard*), "Do you like this play?"

"No." He could see nothing in it.

These people could see nothing in "The Farmer's Wife" because it was rustic, and dealt with a life of which they knew nothing and for which they cared nothing. Eden has put a lot of careful observation of manners into this play.

No place, taken in a certain way—in its weak spots—is more provincial than the West End.

Yesterday on a bus advt. of Co-optimists, a large part of which ran somewhat thus:—

"Started in 1920—Going on for ever"

Pasted across the advt. was a white strip, "Last 2 weeks of present season."

Friday, March 14th.

Yesterday, Reform lunch. Talking about gambling. It was defended by James Currie and even by Lord Buckmaster. Stated to be the one distraction of the people. There is, however, fornication. Apropos of all this, when I was coming home from Hammersmith in the Tube yesterday evening, two workmen got in, one about 35 and the other 18 or 20. They carried paint pots and 'turps' pots wrapped in paper and covered at top (paint pots, i.e.) with paper with a hole for brush handle to poke through. Dirty. Shabby. Dirty hands. Dirty caps, with big peaks. The young one wore black leggings. They pushed the cans as far as possible under seats. The young man was smoking a cigarette. As soon as they sat down each of them pulled a new packet of chewing-gum from his pocket, stripped off the paper, broke the packet in half and put one half into his mouth. I didn't notice any actual jaw-motion of chewing. The young man kept on smoking. The chewing-gum business was evidently a regular thing, and much looked forward to. Obvious satisfaction on their faces as they opened the packets. After a few minutes the young man pulled a novelette from his pocket and went on reading it. (The elder had nothing to read.) Minor distractions of the people: cigarettes, chewing gum, novelettes. I forgot to mention that the young man carried a coil of rope within his buttoned jacket. It stuck up towards his neck.

Monday, March 17th.

Looking yesterday afternoon and evening through window of backroom 2nd floor 21a Sloane St. The whole of the old garden or backyard space between Sloane St. and Pavilion Rd. is built over with annexes to houses, low, chiefly covered with lead, and probably workshops or additional offices. There is no open ground at all, so that the houses apparently might as well be 'back to back' houses. This of course does away with all the nocturnal noises which occur in back gardens in central London. (All back gardens will I suppose ultimately be built over in central London.) From the aforesaid window you see the backs of low (2-storey) houses in Pavilion Rd., chiefly artisan-working places and small shops and garages. Rising over them, beyond, a bit of terra-cotta Harrods. You only hear a faint murmur of occasional garage noises and of the distant traffic in Brompton

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Rd. (at least I suppose it's that). This, even with the window open. But in the front room the thunder of traffic is nearly continuous even on Sunday. However, you get used even to that. 'Musicians' play in Sloane Street, and near 21A, practically all day week days. They interfere with work. The procedure for getting rid of them is thus: You ask them to go away. If they refuse you ask a policeman to tell them. If they refuse the policeman also, you summon them. And (according to a police inspector's testimony) the chances are then 12 to 1 that the summons is dismissed. The Sloane Street musician is of course the result of Sloane Street shoppers' (largely women) generosity to itinerant beggars in the form of bad musicians.

Wednesday, March 19th.

"The Gondoliers" at Prince's last night. I thought this was better than it proved to be. There are at least half a dozen magnificent tunes in it, and beyond those—nothing. Immense *longueurs* in the action, especially towards the end of each act, and the "climactic" explanation on the other hand is much too hurried. The fun is merely childish. Also it is 'healthy' fun. The one joke of the gondolier about taking off his cap or anything else in reason 'seemed quite shocking'. It was all far too respectable. The packed audience was also stodgy and ugly. In fact you wondered where the people came from—so dull were they. However, the applause was much less than it used to be. The whole affair dull, save for the magnif. tunes. I don't want to see any more G. & S. Fundamentally the thing is dead.

Friday, March 21st.

At Ethel Sands at tea yesterday—Leslie, brother of Shane Leslie, sat next to me on the sofa, and after a time said, "Are you interested in Russia at all?" After my reply he went on to say that he had been there last autumn, and I must say that he replied very intelligently and carefully to all my questions. But what struck me was the crudity of his gambit. He was full of Russia and he opened in that way.

He left, and Cynthia Noble took his place; a very fashionable young woman, probably only about 20-21, with a perfectly *maquillée*, etc., face. I almost immediately began with her on my subject of late hours, drugs (aspirin chiefly), cocktails, liqueurs, and salts; all of which I cursed. I was glad to find

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that she was prepared to talk about salts. She agreed with me as to cocktails, but not in much else. However, what struck me a long time afterwards was that I had opened on my subject just as young Leslie had opened on his.

Monday, March 24th.

At the Aldwych Theatre last night Gilbert Frankau suddenly said to me, "I wish I was always calm like you. I mean every day in the small things. Oh, I'm all right in a crisis. Give me a crisis, and I'm equal to it. But in the small daily things, no. I wish I was like you." What he meant I don't know, nor apropos of what he was speaking.

Tuesday, March 25th.

Last night at the Colfax's Ethel Sands said that on Sunday night she was in bed at 9.30 and slept without a break till 8 o'clock. Arthur Colfax said that he would sleep fourteen hours without a break if he was not called. He was called every morning. He liked a little snooze before dinner. Now last night I had what I call a goodish night for me. 12.30 a.m. to about 2.55 a.m. Then about 3.15 a.m. to 5.45 a.m. Then a few short snoozes, totalling perhaps 40 minutes at the very most. In all 5½ hours. I don't think I have ever had to be called, certainly not for 20 or 30 years, even for the most urgent or early occasions. I can always be sure of being awake for anything in reason.

Friday, March 28th.

Edith Sitwell last night told me of the feuds in the verse world. Osbert is always planning some literary practical joke against someone. Siegfried Sassoon won't speak to Osbert now because (he says) Osbert will never leave him alone. He won't speak to Edith, because Edith will not stop Osbert doing his tricks. "But what can I do," said Edith. In revenge, Sacheverell Sitwell swears he will never speak to Siegfried again. It appears also that either Siegfried won't speak to Robert Graves or vice-versa.

Monday, March 31st.

I met George Moore last night at a Phoenix performance. He said he wanted me to go and dine with him and that he would

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tell me about "Riceyman Steps"—a lot of things that I don't know (he said). Then he told me. He said it was the only really objective novel ever written, and very original. (I knew from others that he thought very highly of it.) He said, "It has no form whatever, *no* form. It is not very carefully written—it is adequately written. It has no romantic quality. Yet it holds you. A bookseller crosses the road to get married—that's all. It is disturbing to think that hundreds (he should have said millions) lead their lives just like that. The book is the FACT (he emphasised the word several times) and that's all." Then he repeated about great originality, lack of form etc. . . . Considering that in my opinion it is very well constructed. . . !

Thursday, April 3rd.

Beaverbrook on the phone the other day, after seeing Shaw's "St. Joan". "Arnold, what do you think of St. Joan? I haven't seen many plays; my experience is limited, but it is the greatest play I ever saw. . . . Arnold, I've come to the conclusion that there's a technique for playwriting. There's a trick in it—a technique, and I've thought it all out. My theory may be wrong, but it deserves consideration because I've thought it all out very carefully."

Here was a perfect example of the working of that masterly and yet often crude brain. He didn't see the ridiculous side of suggesting that a dramatic technique existed. But I have no doubt that his own independent theory of dramatic technique will be very interesting and well worth listening to.

I remember he once told me that he wanted to write some narrative (I think it was the life of Christ) in the form of a novel. But he found he couldn't do the dialogue. So he read *in* "The Old Wives' Tale" to "see how it was done". But even then he couldn't do dialogue. So he gave it up. He told me all this quite simply and naturally, without noticing the comical ingenuousness of it.

Friday, May 9th.

Last Saturday we went to the Ba-ta-Clan, Paris, to see "La Danse des Libellules", which I had been told was rather good and very gay, and which I had also heard was the most undressed "revue" in Paris. Paid about 9s. 6d. a seat. House full, though theatre a long way off. I soon saw it wasn't a

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revue, but a musical comedy. Then things in it seemed to remind me of other things. Then we looked at the programme and saw the name of Franz Lehar. It proved to be the French version of what is called in England "The Three Graces", a perfectly terrible piece of inane dullness of which we saw the first night at the Empire some months ago. It was not gay. However, it was perhaps less boring than "The Three Graces", no doubt because the resounding acoustics of the old-fashioned renovated *salle* made some of the hearing difficult. A *petit bourgeois* audience. A few people in evening dress and one woman fairly striking. A long interval for the *journal lumineux* and for the loud incessant hawking of constables. The usual terrible hags as *ouvreuses* and programme sellers. The usual narrow passages. The *contrôle*, usually so smart with evening suits, was very shabby. At the end of Act II we got a taxi to the Quai d'Orsay Hotel, and the taxi and the driver were both apparently in the last stages of poverty.

Saturday, May 10th.

I saw Sir Edward Elgar at the Garrick the other day. I said I was working hard. He at once said, "Ah, you work because it pleases you; we poor men work because we have to." He seldom talks to me without mentioning his poverty and my riches. I suppose this is natural, and I expect I should do it in his place. I have a grievance, and it is that I sleep badly, and I am always mentioning it. "Do you sleep well?" I asked him: He said he did, generally. He said that for thirty years he had had 'a tea-machine' in his bedroom, and if by chance he woke up and didn't think he should go to sleep again easily, he at once got up and made tea and did one or two hours' work. I said I couldn't work in the middle of the night. "Not original work," he said, "but there is generally other work waiting to be done."

Tuesday, May 13th.

Yesterday after lunch I went with L. Faber to Haymarket to meet Hilda Trevelyan, etc., at rehearsal of "Great Adventure". Faber gave his coat and hat to stage-doorkeeper to look after. Therefore so did I. I've never seen this done before. Enclosed stage, curtain down, etc. Very, very small after Drury Lane. I was introduced to La Trobe, the quiet stage manager with a

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great reputation, and to Hilda Trevelyan. Nothing but banalities said between us. Seeing D. standing by herself meekly in the wings, I called her out and introduced her to Hilda T. Then rehearsal began. Old Horace Watson appeared for a moment and nodded to me and vanished again. It only wanted Harrison to appear similarly. This theatre seems to be a sort of enclosed ring, which no one can enter save by permission. Old courtesy is preserved there, and cleanliness reigns. At the stage entrance is a card, and written on it (ought to have been printed): "Please wipe your boots." I have never seen this before at a stage-door.

It took me one hour to get from Piccadilly Circus to my house. Arrival of King and Queen of Roumania at Victoria and their drive to Buckingham Palace. A wild disarray of ordinary traffic. Everything seemed to be diverted. Even Sloane St. was full of wrongly numbered buses. Opposite Hyde Park Corner, very long waits. At last, seeing myself alone inside the bus, I went up the stairs. "No room on top, sir," said the conductor, standing at the top. I continued my way up the stairs. "No room here, sir," he insisted very firmly. "All right," I said *pettishly*. "I'm not coming up." And I stayed on the top step to look. I saw flashes of squadrons of trotting household cavalry in breastplates and helmets, and so on; all picturesque and survival-ish, and highly comic when thought of as real soldiers. Vast crowds of people. No glimpse of sovereigns. Possibly about 100,000 or 200,000 persons inconvenienced by this show. (Still it had to be done.) Later the conductor came inside and said most politely, "There's room on top now, sir." I thanked him with equal politeness. These conductors are the right stuff, wonderfully trained.

Wednesday, May 14th.

Day before yesterday morning I saw, rather too late to judge it, a bus advertisement of "London Life". Believe me that thenceforward I looked for nothing else in the streets but that bus advertisement. I didn't see one during the remainder of the day. Nor yesterday until about 7.45, when just as I was reflecting about something and had forgotten the advertisement I saw one out of the 'tail of my eye'. Too late. It had gone. I am now thoroughly preoccupied with that advertisement in the streets, and shall be till I get used to it.

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Few street things or advertisement things give me so much satisfaction and interest as my things on the buses. Just like George Dream in "London Life".

Thursday, May 15th.

Tailor, Collins, came to try on yesterday. Of the overcoat he said: "It's a beautiful back on you, sir." And of another coat: "It's a lovely run, sir." Also of the same coat: "This is a *young* coat, sir," meaning it made me look young. He also said, when I said I liked the pattern of the new suit: "One mustn't always wear dark clothes, sir. Makes you morbid. This plum colour is a pleasant change."

Friday, May 16th.

Max told the following last night. He had bought the story from a divorce detective for £50 but dare not use it. A woman consulted a divorce detective about her husband's apparent infidelity, and the 'tec said that before doing anything she had better cease to live with him, as if she lived in the same house she might 'condone' his offence and so endanger a divorce. She said she didn't want a divorce, she was very much in love with her husband, and she only wanted to know who the other woman was.

The 'tec at first refused the case, then took it on. The woman then told the 'tec that her husband was in the habit of going away for week-ends, never saying in advance that he was going to stay away, but always telegraphing that he was detained. One night while he was asleep (after return from a week-end) she went through his pockets and found a letter from a house agent by the seaside to say that he could have possession of a certain house; also a cloak-room ticket, Victoria Station. The ticket was for a smallish bag. The 'tec and the lady went together to Victoria, and got the bag, which was locked. The 'tec pulled apart one side of it, and bloodstained stuff was disclosed. They left the bag at the cloakroom. "What can this be?" the 'tec in effect asked. "Nothing," said the lady. "My husband goes fishing and he's probably put a wounded fish into an old shirt or something." And she went on: "Now, you're in *my* service? You're in nobody else's?" The 'tec agreed and she reiterated the fact and he positively agreed.

Sometime later she rang up the 'tec and said: "My husband

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has just left for Victoria in a taxi. You had better watch him there and if necessary follow him." The 'tec replied: "Something grave has occurred, and I must ask you to come here to my office at once, and bring a woman friend with you. Most important." He insisted. She arrived at his office at 6.30. The 'tec said: "I'm sorry to inform you that your husband was arrested for murder at 5.55 at Victoria." The lady said: "You villain. You scoundrel. It is you who have sold him to the police. Yet you swore you were in my service only." The husband was — now of course in prison.

I was in the Park yesterday thinking about a short story, and saw a woman on horseback with an old man who had a striking resemblance to Cunningham Graham. The woman stopped her horse and spoke to me. She said I shouldn't remember her name and I didn't. She then introduced me to Cunningham Graham. C. G. didn't hear. "Who are you?" he asked. "Ah," he said, "I didn't recognise Mr. B. in a hat. The photos of him——" I took off my hat and showed my hair, and said: "Is it true to the photos?" I complimented him and asked how he was. He said, "As well as possible under the reign of MacChadband." Prejudice against Labour showed itself instantly, and you could see that the Labour régime was very much on his mind, since it leaped out at the first opportunity.¹ I stuck up for Ramsay MacDonald. He said that the Clydesiders and especially Kirkwood, always called him MacChadband (because he preached so much). I said he was a very decent fellow. "So was Judas—a very decent fellow!" said C. G. and went on a bit about Judas, larkishly.

"Who told you that, C. G., about Judas?" I asked. He hesitated and said, "I—I got it out of the Talmud." I said, "I see, I withdraw. You have the better of me." He stretched out his hand to say good-bye. A sporting sort of cuss.

Saturday, May 17th.

Lilian Braithwaite lunched with me yesterday at Kettner's. She told me that when her daughter Joyce received a certain play to read, with a view to playing a part, she said to her mother, "Well, I don't see how they *can* ever produce such a thing. It's too awful, absurd" (or something like that). Lilian

¹ The First Labour Government was then in power.

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also read the play and came also to the conclusion that the play would never be produced because it simply couldn't (not that I attach too much importance to the views of actors on plays and parts). However, the play was somehow produced, and it was a most dreadful frost. The curious thing is that the libraries made a *deal before the first night* (Why? Why couldn't they wait a day?) on the strength of Marie Tempest and Marie Lohr being in the cast. As if any names ever saved a hopeless play or even a very bad play. Producing may save a pretty bad play, but acting never. So I think. The Library Committee (supposed to consist of the greatest experts in public stage-taste in London) must have seen a rehearsal or so, or at any rate read the play.

Last night to Lena Ashwell's "Once a week players" performance of Shaw's "The Devil's Disciple" at the Century Theatre, Archer Street, North Kensington, produced by Beatrice Wilson.

Beatrice said she had had to produce the play in ten days, and they always did plays in this period. They dispensed practically with props and scenery. Just a few tables, chairs, window-frames, door-frames, and curtain. Same furniture throughout, whether for a general's headquarters or a widow's modest home. Three soldiers stood for a 'square' of soldiers at the execution, etc. Everything very poor and cheap; but nicely done—not overstepping the modesty of nature—and the play held you, except the last 5 minutes which were very poor. A fellow named Henry Oscar played the lead. Evidently of much experience. Handsome. He did very well. Has done Shakespeare tours. The dialogue is exquisitely written—better than Shaw is writing now, I think. Less glittering, but as pure and fine as Congreve.

I contrasted all this poverty with the great costliness of our Drury Lane production, with its lavish advertising, etc. Dean is producing "London Life" with the most notable skill. You would say he knew everything about plays and producing. Yet the taste of people generally fails somewhere. He wanted me to introduce into the part of the Prime Minister Holyoke (played by Henry Vibart and supposed to be a mixture of Asquith and Balfour with a touch of Rosebery) the words "Wait and see". I refused absolutely at once. Imagine the cheap roar which would follow such a despicable sally.

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Monday, May 19th.

Interesting, and indicating woman's lack of the sense of proportion—all women's nearly,—I have noticed that they will always give more importance to the welfare of flowers than to the welfare of people. I have noticed this over and over again.

Tuesday, May 20th.

All day yesterday rehearsing "The Great Adventure" with Leslie Faber at the Haymarket. He was very good in explaining to the usual incompetent young actors how to do a 'hesitating' scene in a 'clean' way. Also in explaining that the proper sequence in acting was "thought, movement, speech". These young people apparently know nothing and have to be shown the least things, the most obvious things. At the same time Faber, the star, was doing comic business with hot milk while Honoria made her great speech descriptive of the Abbey—a monstrous thing which would have absolutely ruined the speech. Of course I stopped him. He then said he thought *I* should!¹ Good God! He also made even Hilda Trevelyan deliver 40 or 50 words straight up stage only because he wanted to be ranging to and fro at the back of the stage. I stopped that too.

Thursday, May 22nd.

In my two plays now rehearsing I have two unusually stupid actors. One tries, the other may try, but doesn't seem to. He has to be told everything, yet has the reputation of being a very good actor. In one scene he is patronising. Told to be very deferential and really worshipful, he said, "Yes, I see," and does the scene again in exactly the same manner. He did the scene several times. He is a conceited man and therefore can't learn. He knows little or nothing about articulation and enunciation, and cannot be heard clearly, or sometimes at all, even in 3rd row of stalls.

Friday, May 23rd.

Rehearsal. X. complained much the other day about the producer's harsh attitude. "He never gives us any praise. I can't sleep. If it hadn't been for my kind author, I should have

¹ i.e. he thought that A. B. would do comic business with hot milk while Honoria spoke, if Ilam Carve were really A. B.

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walked out before this." This is a woman of 45-50, thoroughly experienced, ought to know life, married, etc. Yet she behaves very much like a child. All stage artists more or less the same. This producer is rude to young beginners and he ought not to be; but he is never more than hard or harsh to the others. He did spring on to the stage after a scene the other day and say: "This is appalling." But so it was appalling. It appeared that many of the company had been antagonised by him. I explained to this actress all the weight of worries and hard work on his shoulders—immense; far greater than hers, etc. She began to perceive things. The next morning I spoke briefly, but with a solemn beginning, to the producer: "You'd better give them some praise to-day." He said: "I give H. lots of praise in private." "The women," I said. He said, with significance: "Thank you." On the following day everything was all smiles, and X. radiant, positively. "How *did* you do it?" she said.

What a world!

Wednesday, May 24th.

Yesterday at rehearsal of Act IV, Sc. 1 of "Great Adventure", Faber asked another actor what his feelings were—what it meant to him, when Carve showed his two moles. This actor hesitated some time, and then said: "It means I'm ruined." On being informed that the case was precisely the reverse he said: "The play as a whole has never been shown to me, and I don't know the story." He had rehearsed the scene several times; the scene explains itself; yet he had never understood its point. He had just gone on playing it with an entirely wrong set of simulated emotions within him. Even at the worst one would have thought that he might have bought a copy of the play for 3s. 6d. and read it. I admit that in my opinion the play ought to be read in its entirety to the Company.

A man at the Haymarket told me yesterday that he had just seen in Piccadilly an old lady, parading with a board; "I am the widow of Bennett Burleigh,¹ the famous war correspondent, and I am forced to this method—" I forget the rest. Anyhow, she must be an old lady of some character.

¹ Bennett Burleigh died June 17, 1914. He had been for thirty years war correspondent for the *Daily Telegraph*, during which period he had gone on every campaign and war of any note.

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Monday, May 26th.

I was told that the organist of Westminster Abbey got a salary of £350 a year, plus a house. How he was to keep up the house on the £350 was not explained. The theory was that his position enabled him to do profitable business, such as teaching, for himself. In the meantime four canons receive £1,000 a year each for three months' work, and hold livings besides. This matter ought to be gone into.

Tuesday, June 10th.

I went to the "Great Adventure" at the Haymarket on Saturday night for the 2nd act only, in order to see what Ilam Carve was doing during Honoria's long speech in Sc. 2 describing the funeral. I found that the star was playing the fool and getting laughs the whole time, drawing the attention of the audience away from the speech and preventing it from getting over. So I wrote to him to try to stop this. He was, like many stars, flagrantly breaking a rule which he would lay down for every other member of the cast.

Wednesday, June 11th.

Robert Bion told me yesterday that he had had considerable difficulty in getting into England. He had no difficulty in getting to Dover, but there he was stopped, and the people in charge told him he must go back, he could not be permitted to enter:—unemployment problem,—law that no foreigner must be allowed to take a job that an Englishman could do. Robert, who is no fool, pointed out that no system of warning people was in force, that he would have all his expenses for nothing, that Wembley was being advertised and pushed abroad and people were being urged to come to see it, but apparently when they reached England they were turned back. The underling in charge listened, and was decent in manner and attitude, and then said he would ask his chief. The chief came and heard, and then said laconically: "Let him in." And that is how things are done. No official reason for "letting him in".

Tuesday, June 17th.

Elsa Lanchester and Harold Scott came to lunch yesterday. She had a most charming dress, home-made. She said she had made

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it out of dusters, and I believe she had. Very young. A lovely complexion, wonderful shock of copper hair; a rather queerly blunted nose. Harold staggered her and D. by arriving in a hat. He never wears hats, but had apparently decided to learn to dress. Both deeply interested in their cabaret schemes. Discussing it among themselves and with Dorothy. Largely ignoring me, though with no conscious rudeness. Youthful severity on other people. I offered to pay for some chairs and tables for their cabaret, but they were not at all keen on them, apparently preferring the audience to sit on the floor. However, they took them. I should say that these people are bound to do something good. They are full of *original* inventiveness and of distinction.

Monday, September 8th.

Alex Erskine's consulting-room. Neurologist. He has told me wonderful stories, which I believe, of trance states, etc. He had a youngish subject to go to sleep in my presence. After I had gone, he said to the subject: "Did you see into that man's (my) mind? What did you see?" (This was while the subject was awake.) The subject said: "His mind is like this. If you want to stop his stammering, tell him to stammer like hell and insist on his stammering." I thought this was rather good. I have always noticed that when I practised Coué-ism on myself, the impediment got worse.

Nevertheless, under Erskine's daily suggestion, and reading many times and saying many times daily to myself: "I have *perfect* confidence in myself. I am *never* nervous. I have *complete* control over my speech," the impediment gets less. In seven séances Erskine has failed to put me to sleep. But I have gone off once or twice for a few seconds; only the slightest noise or movement or touch wakes me up.

Wednesday, September 10th.

T. S. Eliot came to see me at the Reform Club last night, between two of my engagements. He wanted to interest me in Virginia Woolf's reply in his *Criterion* (2nd reply it really was) to a few remarks of mine about character-drawing in fiction about a year ago in *Cassell's Weekly*. He wanted a contribution on the subject. I said I would do one, probably in the form of fragmentary notes, but that I wouldn't give a date for delivery and I would

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make it a reply to her. Pale, quiet, well assured. He works at Lloyds Bank, in a department of his own, 'digesting' foreign financial and economic journals. Interesting work, he said, but he would prefer to be doing something else. He edits the *Criterion*, and writes, in the evenings. I said to him: "I want to ask you a question. It isn't an insult. Were the notes to 'Wastelands' a lark or serious? I thought they were a skit." He said that they were serious, and not more of a skit than some things in the poem itself. I understood him. I said I couldn't see the point of the poem. He said he didn't mind what I said as he had definitely given up that form of writing, and was now centred on dramatic writing. He wanted to write a drama of modern life (furnished flat sort of people) in a rhythmic prose "perhaps with certain things in it accentuated by drum-beats". And he wanted my advice. We arranged that he should do the scenario and some sample pages of dialogue. I found him extremely sound in taste. He had excellent views about the "Virginia" school of fiction. He had discovered Pauline Smith's stuff in the *Adelphi* for himself, etc. I liked him much more than ever before.

Thursday, September 11th.

I was thinking about what T. S. Eliot and I had said about character in fiction. A character has to be conventionalised. It must somehow form part of the pattern, or lay the design of the book. Hence it must be conventionalised. You can't put the whole of a character into a book, unless the book were of inordinate length and the reader of inordinate patience. You must select traits. You must take many traits for granted, and refer to them, as you do and must refer to them in a way to show that they are conventionalised. If you wanted to get at total truth you'd only get a confused picture. Question: Does a novelist want his characters to remain in the mind of the reader? Some novelists don't. But I do, for one. Dickens's characters remain in the mind. They may perhaps be too conventionalised, too simplified. Same for Thackeray—Dobbin and Amelia. But they remain in the mind. No novelist can always be creating absolutely new, or fresh, characters. Balzac used the same frame of conventionalisation over and over again. His titled amorous dames many of them of the same pattern. So did Shakespeare. So did Scott. This implies a form of con-

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ventionalisation. Then half-critics say, when they observe the necessary conventionalisation, that there is no character-drawing at all. The thing is to produce an impression on the reader—the best you can, the truest you can: but some impression. The newest despisers of form and conventionalisation produce no impression at all.

Friday, September 12th.

I walked forth and visited second-hand shops (and bought one Staffs figure group 25s.) yesterday morning, and searched for and found a lot more really useful ideas for my new play "The Dance Club". This notion of combining 2nd hand shops with creative cerebration is a very good one. But I walked too far, and after my afternoon sleep had neuralgia, which lasted throughout the night. I went to Ciro's to meet D. and while waiting for her met Rothermere. He was saying 'What? What?' louder and more gun-like than ever. He said: "I particularly want to have a talk with you." So I asked him to lunch. He merely said "I'll come, I'll come," in a tone as though announcing something surprising.

Monday, September 15th.

Yesterday D. and I drove up to Jack Straw's Castle, via Golders Green, in a taxi and had a good view of the garden cities or suburbs N. of London. Enormous 12.30 crowds on road-terrace in front of Jack Straw's Castle. I very much doubt if I had ever been up there before. Fine views of London, and Primrose Hill (?) in between. A very clear and rather windy day, and yet some mist over London, showing, comparatively, what sort of a hole we live in. I was afraid of Jack Straw's Castle at first. But upstairs the dining-room was all right. Nice cornice. Nice old, broken overmantel, and not a bad wall-paper. Two or three waiters, with perhaps third-hand dress coats. But decent waiters. "The beef's English, sir," etc., with assurance. Curious clientele. A fat man and his fat wife. The man wore his hat all the time, and had his napkin under his chin. A big grey moustache. Evidently a powerful character. They both silently gave all their attention and energy to the business of eating. After lunch the terrace-road practically empty. We went and sat in the sun below. Day full of colour. It ought to have rained but didn't.

At night. Lanchester & Scott's "select evenings". Opening of season. About 50 people there; mostly young; mostly in morning dress. A beautiful Canadian girl whose pink dress I nearly set on fire with a dropped cigarette and to whom I gave a card of introduction to Basil Dean. Of course she wanted only the 'tiniest part' in any of my plays. Room too dark for my taste, and floor too dark—too darkly stained. The play performed was Tristan Bernard's "Sylvie" one act. Full of soliloquies and old-fashioned dodges but it was full of life still. Translated and produced by Dorothy. "Stage" much too dark. No farcical comedy could get its full effect in such a gloom. That is certain. Still it went well.

About "Uncle Spencer". This is the 1st book of Aldous Huxley's that I have really liked. Character drawing in it, for the first time in his books. Uncle Spencer is *drawn*, emphatically. But technically the story is clumsy. Why an uncle at all? It serves no purpose. Why a nephew? Why is story told in 1st person by nephew. Serves no purpose. And for the 2nd part of the story, after nephew leaves Belgium at beginning of war, it is a positive hindrance to convincingness, you feel all the time that the nephew could not possibly have known all the details of gesture, thought, etc., which he relates. (Same with Conrad.) The prison stuff is well done. The little music-hall star is well done. The story nearly ends artistically. Aldous doesn't finish; he ceases. But another perfect page and the end would have been good. He shirks the final difficulty and so there is no end. Same with the next best story "Little Mexican". No end to it. But the character drawing of the N. Count is good. "Fard" is a Tchekoff story. But the feelings of the maid when mistress tells her to rouge herself to hide her tiredness are shirked.

More about novel writing and character drawing. You couldn't fill in a whole character except in a book of enormous length. The young ones don't seem to me to 'select'. They shove in pell-mell whatever happens to strike them. They don't construct even a character. Then they think they are truer to life: but they aren't. Description of faces is futile. Waste of time. Give the reader something to hold on to, and then let him fill in for himself.

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Tuesday, September 16th.

Constance Duchess of Westminster's furniture being sold up to-day at Cadogan Square. I went to look at it yesterday morning. There is no reason why the furniture of a Duchess should not be showy, or ugly, or dull, yet it shocks one to find it so. I was surprised at the smallness of the house, too. A policeman in the hall. Dealers and go-betweens in the porch. One of them asked me if he could do anything for me. I said I'd see; but I saw nothing I wanted. When I came out he gave me his card and he told me he could get me anything I wanted anywhere at any time. He said he knew my face, but not my name; he said: "We never forget a face—except those who owe us money."

Erskine told me yesterday that on Friday a young gardener came to him. He stammered terribly—terribly. But he was a 'lovely subject'. He got him to sleep at once. And when he came out he scarcely stammered at all. The man was dazed. He couldn't believe it. He said: "My wife won't know me." He was to return on Saturday morning to be finished off. He never came. Nor did Erskine hear from him. Why didn't he come? Was he scared of a second experience? Or does he think that he is sufficiently cured for practical purposes?

I went into the Oratory yesterday morning to think out characterisation of "The Dance Club" play. Men were tuning the organ and calling out to one another monotonously. Cleaners sweeping and dusting (11.30 a.m.). I chose what I thought was a quiet place in the nave. A cleaner came up behind me and said, "You're getting the dust here, sir. *But I'll be as quiet as I can.*" Very polite. I then noticed that the air was full of dust. He had somehow crept up behind me without my noticing it. So I went off into a transept.

Tuesday, September 23rd.

Aldous Huxley came yesterday afternoon to do what he had called on the telephone 'pay his homage'. He looked older and more distinguished. His clothes seemed to be Italian and in material if not in fit very nice. Altogether he looked better and talked more easily. We agreed on nearly all literary questions except the value of his "Antic Hay". He likes that book, thinks it has a point to it. He seemed to agree with my few

criticisms of "Uncle Spencer". He said his wife had driven him in a Citroën from Florence to Ostend, over the Alps, etc. Said she was mad about driving, and a bit inclined to be a speed-merchant. He told me some funny tales about Fascism. One friend of Mussolini's made 40 million lire in two years. He had four very big motor cars of the — Company. It was found out that in exchange for these cars he had let the company off taxation for two years—had promised to do so and *had* done so. The consideration for this great act seems rather trifling to me. Also he insisted on an edict enforcing the little red glass reflectors on the backs of bicycles. The cabinet was not in favour of it, but he got it through, apparently behind their backs. I told Aldous there was bound to be a big rumpus in Italy soon. He thought there was too, but he couldn't see quite what was to be done against 400,000 well-armed Fascists, the only power in the country. I asked Aldous to come early and he came early. After 1½ hours I had to tell him I had to go out. So he left. Very agreeable meeting, this was.

Friday, September 26th.

Lord Dewar made a speech at the anniversary of the Savoy Orpheans Jazz Orchestra on Wednesday night. It had a lot of wit. He said, e.g., "It is fortunate that our jazz bands only use blank cartridges."

Max Beaverbrook rang me up last night and said: "Arnold, I want to tell you. The *Daily Express* has been offered a biography of you written by Mrs. A. B. They wanted to make it a condition that we should treat the offer as confidential, secret; but I absolutely refused to do any such thing. So I'm telling you. Our man has read it all through and likes it. Says he wouldn't mind anyone saying of him in his lifetime what is said of you in the book. If you have any objection I won't buy it: but if you haven't, I'd like to." I reasoned that if the *Express* or any other paper refused it, M. would put the refusal down to me and would be accordingly resentful. She would never understand the awful bad taste of the whole thing, whether accurate or inaccurate, praising or blaming, etc. It is bound to be published somewhere; it is bound to make people think that I am partner in the bad taste. But if it is to be published I would sooner it be published by someone who is very friendly and who will take care that nothing offensive appears in it.

Saturday

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SEPTEMBER 26-SEPTEMBER 29, 1924

Saturday, September 27th.

Max rang me up again yesterday about M.'s life of me. He said he had now read it all through, and it was unadulterated praise. The parts describing me at work were good and interesting: the literary criticism dull. He said he would certainly put a prefatory note at the beginning, to say that she had been separated from me for some years.

Without that (said he) the thing would be "intolerable", as anyone not in the know would think I had been conspiring with her to make some advertisement for myself.

Yesterday, after some hesitations, I began the final writing of the 1st act of "The Dance Club". I went to Brompton Oratory in the morning to get some colour for the opening. I sat there about 15 minutes and got one idea, and suddenly saw that I could start. So I came back home and from 12 to 1 wrote my reminiscence from my 1907 journal, so that I should be quite free in the afternoon. After lunch I went to bed, and began to work at 3.30 only. I did the two opening scenes, up to the opening of the 1st big scene between Lucien and Flora, so I was very content, because I worked very conscientiously.

Monday, September 29th.

Miss E. B. used to be my secretary about 30 years ago on *Woman*. I never saw her from that day till Saturday. She had called without an appointment and I wasn't in, and then had written, and I saw her on Saturday at 3—only she was 25 minutes late. She was quite blind, except that on good days she can see the red of a pillar-box, etc. She looked much the same and spoke in the same rather positive cheerful way. She was now living in a basement room and was well looked after and happy. She had a roll of MS. music. She wanted to help Mr. R. who had done so much for her. Mr. R. had written a song which he thought would unite the warring sects of the Irish nation if only it could be made widely known. I examined the song. It was impossible for me honestly to give any sort of encouragement. She then showed me two MS. poems, short and not much below the level of the popular ballad. I said they might do for ballad music. I said the only thing for R. to do was to go and see a publisher. I strongly urged that he should not publish at his own cost. I then went down and fetched Mr. R. Mr. R.

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was reading the *Daily News*—absorbed in it, he seemed. As soon as I spoke he gave a jump, dropped his eyeglasses and sprang up. He had lots of schemes. One was for a weekly magazine of poetry. Another was for penny volumes of verse; one of his own for instance, entitled 'perhaps' "A Bunch of Roses". "Get Smiths interested in it; people would see it everywhere on the bookstalls, they would pick it up as they went home, and it would have an enormous sale." This was his second string if he failed to unite Ireland ("help to cement the bonds of brotherhood") with his song. I could see that he meant, whatever I said, to print that song at his own expense after all. He had simply got to see it in print.

Tuesday, September 30th.

On Sunday night when I came home from the theatre F. W. B. was just leaving. He stopped (and kept me up) to tell me about Marguerite. She had been to Putney to see Tertia and William who were out. So she went to F. W. B.'s hotel (with Robert Bion) unannounced, and found Frank. She asked him to identify a photograph of the Newcastle Middle School. He did so. She told him that she had written 15,000 words of articles on me (evidently she is proud of the number of words), which were to be published in the *Express*. She said that she meant to write two or three other works about me. This was only the first one.

All deplore her bad taste.

Wednesday, October 1st.

I took Sissie last night to "Fata Morgana" at Ambassadors. Jeanne de Casalis, Tom Douglas (American boy—very good), Reg. Bach and others. A fine ensemble of acting, and a good production. House full. The play did not seem to be anything very important. Rather shop-girlish. Untrue. Sentimental. Still, the woman was well and harshly drawn, and there were touches throughout that were 'continental' in the sense of 'free' handling of situations. I thought, contrary to general opinion, that Acts II and III were quite as good as Act I.

We sat in the front row of the dress-circle. What a dowdy—and untidy-haired set of women. Very few people in dress

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SEPTEMBER 30-OCTOBER 4, 1924

circle in evening dress. Provincial. A bit stupid. No style. This seems to me to be a considerable change from pre-war.

"The Great Adventure" played to £1,610 last week—its best week. But it is coming off on Oct. 18 because the receipts fell for two weeks earlier (in the run) to less than £1,200 a week. Harrison had the right to give me notice to terminate the run. And he did so, not believing in the chances of the play. He was justified, though to my mind a little panicky. He made contracts with McKinnel and others for Galsworthy's play, "Old English", and he must keep them, or it pays him better to keep them, or he thinks it pays him better to keep them.

Thursday, October 2nd.

Osbert Sitwell lunched with me yesterday at Reform Club. By arrangement, Swinnerton joined us. Before lunch S. Sassoon came up and said: "Can I lunch at your table to-day?" (In pursuance of my reproaches that he would keep by himself in the club) I said, "Certainly. You must. Osbert is coming." Sort of silly feud between him and Osbert. S. S. drew back but I made him come. A little occasional acerbity in S. S.'s tone at times, but it was quite all right. At the end I made S. S. see Osbert out of the Club.

Saturday, October 4th.

I finished the final (2nd) writing of the 1st act of "The Dance Club" yesterday at 6.45 p.m. This act seems to me to have more emotion in it than anything dramatic that I have written for a long time. Some of it I rather enjoyed writing and looked forward to the labour of writing.

Tavia and Evelyn Forster dined here last night and Arnold Bax and Mr. and Mrs. D. F. came in afterwards. D. F. seems more decent than I had thought. But he is really very simple and provincial. He is a member of the Dail and apt to refer to that and to address you as if *you* were the Dail. He forms his sentences too elaborately for conversation. He told some good stories—not too well. Mrs. D. F. told a good story. About some semi-swell who was at a village party. A girl who had come from a village a mile or two off cottoned on to him and at the end said: "Will I lay with you to-night, sir." "Certainly not," said the visitor. "But I'll walk home with you." Long dark walk. Cold night. The girls hated it. A neigh-

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bour said, "Sure and that was what she wanted but she didn't like to ask for it."

Wednesday, October 8th.

Walking in Fulham Road yesterday morning I saw in a slatternly chemist's shop a section of window given to "Yeast is life. Vitamines mean health. X—Yeast Tablets. . . . A lightning pick-me-up" guaranteed (or money back) to aid headaches, etc., in 5 minutes, flatulence, etc., in 5 to 10, stomach trouble in 10 to 15, flu cold in 24 hours. I went in and bought some—probably because I used to take yeast and it may have done me a certain amount of good. I didn't know what was in the tablets (beyond yeast). I knew that for many years I had tried all sorts of remedies and that not one of them had succeeded with me. Yet, as usual, I had hope again. I believed again, etc., etc. I took stuff blind again. This indestructible (though often destroyed) faith in quack medicine advertisements is a very interesting and perhaps almost universal trait. I took a tablet. Felt nothing. But about tea time I felt a rather wonderful change in my organism. After tea I took two more tablets—or was it before tea? Anyhow I felt very much better. I took two on going to bed, and I have had the best night for many weeks. In fact I slept $5\frac{3}{4}$ hours, of which $3\frac{1}{4}$ at a stretch. I felt I could do with more sleep; but I couldn't get it. However, I have much more energy and optimism to-day.

In the afternoon I went up to Charing Cross Road to look at bookshops. Plenty of people looking at them. What struck me was that about half of the books outside the shop are so displayed—generally so low down—that you can't see the titles without physical feats. They are not attractively displayed either. They are as a general rule, stacked anyhow on the shelves and without order.

Thursday, October 9th.

Friendships made between young women on the telephone—solely. I have come across more than one instance of this. They like the tones of each other's voices and the things they say. And the friendship grows. Then comes an invitation to tea or another meal. "Do come." "I should love to" etc. I wonder what the results are. But I never hear. This method of companionship (sightless) is very queer.

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OCTOBER 8-OCTOBER 11, 1924

One sees very frequently young women and girls together in the street (lower middle class and a bit above) giggling with much vigour. Whenever I have heard them talking in these giggles, the matter has been utterly trifling. They will giggle 'consumedly' if crossing a road and in danger of death from a bus; or at some peculiar sight. They will cling on to each other while they giggle. In the male sex this phenomenon is practically non-existent.

Friday, October 10th.

I dined at Knoblock's last night. The Cochrans were there. Also the Gerald Kellys. They were just off to America—portrait painting. Cochran told at some length the story of how he got Trini from Seville to London—negotiations with parents. She was seventeen. She insisted that she should be taken to a bull-fight, and that a carriage of a certain sort with coachmen and footmen dressed in a certain way should call for her. She lived in a foul street, which Cochran's Spanish friend forbade him to enter. So he waited for her at the bull-ring. She didn't come. Then they went to find out. Trini and her mother were in bed. Father had taken all their clothes and sold them for drink and had also sold the two bull-ring tickets which Cochran, according to contract, had bought for them near the box in which he was to sit with Trini. However, she went the next Sunday. The contract included Britain and America. There was a devil of a business about California being in U.S.A. Trini couldn't be permitted to go to California where there were brigands, cowboys, and all sorts of horrors. So the contract was altered. "The United States of America, except California."

Kelly told me of two poetical sayings to him of an old woman who lived all alone. "My visitors are the night and the day." And "I am as lonely as an asparagus." (The wild asparagus, which grows high and thin on one stalk here and there on the plains, and out of which a lovely something is cooked—I forget what.)

Saturday, October 11th.

"White Cargo" last night by Leon Gordon. Playhouse. This is not a good play, but it is the ground plan of a good play. It has form, and it has a great deal of truth here and there. Most of the dialogue is wooden, conventional, etc. Most of the acting

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is conventional and even bad. But Horace Hodges as a dipsomaniac doctor, with a charming disposition, was admirable. Nobody else earned my praise. What is enheartening about this play is that it does try to be realistic, and there is no concession to sentimentality in it, even at the end, and no love story with a dawn, and what there is ends ruthlessly—and yet the play is a success, and was obviously liked. Indeed I have seldom heard more applause in a theatre on an ordinary night. And at the end the people did not want to go. Audiences, however, are terrible. In the 3rd act, at perhaps the most tragic moment of the play, a character has to say of another "Poor bloody fool." Roars of laughter. Why? The censor has only just begun to allow the word 'bloody' on the stage.

Thursday, October 16th.

I noticed last night for the first time that the lamps in the Square at this date are lighted by lamplighters.

Dinner party at Wells's last night. This party was apparently got up to meet Margaret Sanger. G. B. S. left silently immediately after dinner. Mrs. Shaw stayed on. E. W. MacBride, zoologist, is a very jolly, boyish, comic-looking clever old man.

This morning, two black nuns, heavily draped, begging in Ovington Street. They walked up the narrow front steps exactly side by side. The senior held the book, morocco bound. The junior rang the bell and then they stood side by side, the junior with crossed arms. While waiting they faced right angles to the door. At one house they were evidently refused at once. They descended the steps side by side. At the next house they stayed a minute or two and probably got something. *Même jeu.* I saw them mount the steps of a third house.

The day before yesterday I was passing down towards King's Road, when a shabby young man with three medals on his coat held out a bag to me. I am always inveighing against the sin of charity in the street; but there was something painfully silly and futile in the aspect of this young man, and I stopped, and said "Look here, I object to this sort of thing. However . . ." And I threw 6d. into his bag. "Good luck to you, sir," he said foolishly. I then noticed another young man with a barrel organ in the gutter, and the organ started disgustingly playing. A rotten lapse on my part.

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OCTOBER 16-OCTOBER 22, 1924

Saturday, October 18th.

Last night I had a letter from a solicitor and notary at Ayr telling me that Professor Grierson of Edinburgh University had awarded me the Tait Black Novel Prize for 1923 for "Riceyman Steps". Money: £141, and asking me if I would accept it! I replied that I would. This is the first prize for a book I ever had.

Monday, October 20th.

Collins the tailor, trying on new trousers on Saturday, asked me whether I wanted a "break" at the foot. As I hesitated he said, "Just a shiver." I said yes. Shiver is a lovely word for this effect.

Tuesday, October 21st.

First night of Harwood and Tennyson Jesse's "Pelican" at Ambassadors last night. Josephine Victor, an actress new to London, played the lead. I heard she came from New York and is of Hungarian extraction. She played magnificently and acted everybody else off the stage, really. Only Herbert Marshall and Nicholas Hannen could compare with her at all.

Then to Garrick Club, and ate a kipper (6d.) which was magnificent. Clubs are useful.

Lawrence Langner came to see me yesterday. He said positively that the American taste was against drawing-room plays and decidedly in favour of what he called *genre* plays, i.e. plays of character strongly developed, middle class or lower middle class. He urged me to write a Five Towns play, even if I did it specially for U.S.A.

Wednesday, October 22nd.

First night of Galsworthy's "Old English" at Haymarket. Generally speaking untrue. Still the principal character, fine old English man of business, had a coherence of its own and was well played on old-fashioned lines by McKinnel. Sissie liked the whole of the play except the end, when the old gent dies of over-drinking. She simply disliked this because she is so strongly teetotal. Similarly she disliked the old man's pious daughter, because she objected to the bad qualities of the character. Apparently in Sissie's mind there is a complete confusion between moral and artistic perceptions. I have noticed this before

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in her at the theatre. And she is 54 or 55, of wide experience in affairs, a magistrate, a public speaker and no fool.

Wednesday, October 29th.

Last night with Lucas to "Charlot's Revue" at Prince of Wales Theatre. Largish theatre and very full. Revue chiefly idiotic. Maisie Gay and Phyllis Monkman both admirable. Monkman acted an emotional part in a Chink tragedy marvellously well. Audience quite indiscriminating, enjoyed almost hysterically the most silly infantile things.

Saturday, November 22nd.

Depression, because I saw no prospect of finishing "Dance Club" play to-day or to-morrow, as I had hoped. I gave up all notion of finishing and couldn't think of any of the ideas necessary for the final scene between Flora and Clair. When I got home from the Empire I was, as a consequence of neuralgia pains, a bit sick. This sickness in turn at once relieved the pain. Instantly I felt better and instantly the hope of finishing the play miraculously returned, and ideas for the last scene came into my head and I became actively creative again. I have noticed this before: return of creativeness immediately upon surcease from pain.

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Sunday, January 18th.

I got home on Thursday night in a thick fog after a calendar month of almost continuous sunshine in Genoa, Naples, and Pisa. Owing partly to the soft influences of the climate and to a self-determination to do absolutely nothing for a month, I did not keep a journal. This was a great mistake. And the self-determination was not kept, for I did begin to write an article for Tom Eliot's *Criterion* and failed to finish it.

After a day's work I went to dine at H. C.'s last night. I was very hungry. Seven people. There was soup, one chicken, cauliflower, salad, Christmas pudding and fruit-salad, for seven people. Only the Christmas pudding saved me from acute discomfort. I left early, falsely pleading a headache, and got home just in time (11 p.m.) to get a meal here.

Chiropodist yesterday. He congratulated me on my toenails. Said they were strong—a sure sign of a good constitution. He said in a sort of ecstasy, "It's a grand thing, a nail is!"

Tuesday, January 20th.

One of the main things, at my age, is to avoid strain—"pushing forward" (as you do when you are in a taxi and are getting late for an appointment). Nearly all my life I have been keeping to a time-programme, and I have been doing it until quite recently, and have carried programmes through in spite of neuralgia and such obstacles. I think that now this method results in less instead of more work. On Sunday afternoon, after two hours' work with Knoblock on "Mr. Prohack" in the morning (with neuralgia) I gave up the bit of re-writing that I had meant to do in the afternoon, and stayed in bed all afternoon, and of course felt much stronger. In fact towards six I was really inclined to clear off some small oddments, including a 300-word of appreciation of Thomas Hardy for *Harpers*, which I did, all right.

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Yesterday morning my scheme was to re-write the end of Act II of "Prohack" in the morning. However, I had a sense of rush and strain even before breakfast, and so I became placid and gave myself all day to finish Act II, and telephoned to Knoblock suggesting that he should put off our appointment to proceed with Act III from 3 p.m. yesterday to 11 a.m. to-day. He agreed. I finished the Act easily at 7 p.m. and in the meantime had read the whole of Johnson's little book on me.¹ (Not bad.) The sense of strain had gone, and though I had neuralgia all day, I felt better, and had quite a fair night and began to do letters and oddments at 8 a.m. in good form.

Wednesday, January 21st.

Anthony Hope told me last night at Lady Russell's² dinner party that on every first night Henry Irving gave an immense champagne supper to about 300 people—journalists and friends. Also that all sorts of people had free entry to the theatre on any night—and if no seats they stood. You only had to know Irving or Bram Stoker³ or Loveday in order to be let in, without any trouble. Hope had the *entrée*. Irving also had a heavy permanent salary list. Hope said that his sister-in-law Suzanne Sheldon was engaged by Irving by the year, but never played for more than 3 or 4 months in the year. Hope said humorously that all subscription lists were opened by Irving as a matter of course by "Henry Irving, £105". And so on. I asked how Irving could live. Hope said he thought he did not make anything out of the Lyceum, but made large sums on tour and in America. There must have been a chronic state of hard-up-ness. Hope said that towards the end Irving had the beginnings of a great success with "Richard II", and then fell down and hurt his leg, and couldn't play. They tried Herman Vezin,⁴ etc., but nothing would work. However Irving left £10,000, which surprised Hope, who expected only a schedule of debts. He said that Irving would never pay a royalty to an author, because he

¹ "Arnold Bennett", by L. G. Johnson.

² Countess Russell, the well-known author of "Elizabeth and her German Garden", etc.

³ The author of "Dracula" joined Irving in 1878 when he took over the Lyceum Theatre; H. J. Loveday was stage-manager for many years. He died in 1911.

⁴ A great Shakespearean actor who had played with Phelps. He died in 1910.

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¹ General S
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² By E. M

³ "Serena
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JANUARY 21, 1925

would never give to anyone even the theoretical right to inspect his books. His attitude towards the author was the old one: "Send for the fellow and we'll tell him what we want him to do." He would pay as much as £1,000, but not more—without difficulty. Hope said that Bram Stoker came to him, Hope, more than once, suggesting that he should write a play, but Hope wouldn't write without a royalty and Irving wouldn't pay a royalty.

I met Ian Hamilton¹ last night at Lady Russell's, and he is a very nice and artistic sort of an old man. I like him much. I praised his writing highly (which it deserves—what I've read of it, and I've thought so for years) whereat he was clearly much pleased. "I feel several inches taller," said he on leaving, using a terrible *cliché*, as even artists will. He said he couldn't work much because he had so much to do—travelling and speechifying—in connection with ex-service men's organisations.

Last night I had more distressing instances of my failure to recognise people whom I know. Three. Lord and Lady G., whom I had met at a luncheon some weeks ago, and Mrs. Cazalet whom I surely ought to know quite well. I hadn't the least idea who any of them were, and each of them had to make the first move, while I groped after the identity. Coming home from Pisa last week I met, at different parts of the journey, four people whom I knew and hadn't, again, the slightest notion who they were.

Still reading Stendhal's "*Mémoires d'un Touriste*", slowly. Second time. Why? I suppose because of the fellow's mind, also because of slackness in starting something else. Yesterday I at last bought "*A Passage to India*",² and Lady Jones's pseudonymous "*Serena Blandish*",³ which is greatly praised. I began the latter at once, and doubt if I shall praise it myself. Seems to me to be too pastiche, mannered. I also bought Legouis and Cazamian's "*Histoire de la littérature anglaise*", chiefly in order to read the pages on myself. In the way of negative criticism I thought them good; but less so in the way of positive appreciation. However, they show some insight and a desire to be judicial: which is something.

¹ General Sir Ian Hamilton. His despatches from Gallipoli and "*Gallipoli Diary*" were literary masterpieces.

² By E. M. Forster.

³ "*Serena Blandish, or the difficulty of Getting Married, by a Lady of Quality.*"

Abbeville, 21-6-15

Arrived Abbeville 4.15, having taken ^{2 1/2} hours
taken nearly 3 hours to do about 80 or 90 kils.
The whole line, ~~at~~ station, & scene make an
impression like perpetual Sunday, except for
soldiers & camps.

Had two collections of girls.

Amiens. Very old man in a new long blue blouse,
& rubber check trousers showing beneath
acting as porter & showing a truck along. Portally
had colored oven brought back again.

Just & Just of Creil, & ^{over the} new bridge.
Remains of old bridge laid out below on
bank of river.

Paris. Here I realised how few people
in train. No difficulty about luggage &
luggage. I had at first rather a false impression
about streets; in big streets over half the
shops were closed. Then I recollected that the
hour was after 7. A peculiar feeling
conveyed all over Paris. No automobiles, but
buses. Few taxis. I saw the horse bus
Madelaine Bastille, with a woman in charge:
bareheaded, with a great black bag over
her abdomen. About 40; on easy terms with
hassengers. Hotel Marmont very crowded. Very
few people for dinner; nevertheless a party
including children. In the evening I went to football
after dinner. Football wouldn't believe
that 33 submarines sunk. Very harsh on
Staff. We walked both ways. Paris was

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JANUARY 22-JANUARY 27, 1925

Thursday, January 22nd.

I read a fair lot of Enid Jones's "Serena Blandish" early this morning, and liked it more. It is a pastiche, and the writing is therefore mannered, and sometimes she slips, constructionally or grammatically, in her elaborations.

But there is stuff in the book—ideas, and some nice turns of plot and idea. I am getting to like the book; which shows that until you are quite sure that a book isn't and cannot be good, you may profitably proceed with it.

Tuesday, January 27th.

I finished Forster's "A Passage to India" this morning at about 5 a.m. The central part of this book (the trial etc. of innocent Aziz for an attempt on Adela Quested in a cave) is a magnificent piece of work. I should call it strictly first-class. The herd instinct among the British section of Chandrapore is perfectly done. There are also many other very fine, and even first-class things in the book. It is all very good indeed. The writing here and there slips up over phrasing—is a bit too clever, or a bit too pert or colloquial; but on the whole the style is excellent.

Yet the book left me with a sense of disappointment. I think the reason is that I don't know quite what it is about. Aziz, the Moslem doctor, is the chief character, and he is life-like. So are all the Indian characters. So are most of the British characters. He gets into a mess with the British Raj through the hysteria of Adela Quested, and gets out of it again through Adela's honesty. You are made to see that there are two sides to the Indian question, with considerable impartiality. But as soon as Aziz is acquitted, the story seems to curve away towards Aziz as himself, scarcely related to the British Raj problem.

Some chapters, then, are a bit feeble because his psychology, and that of others, is merely described, instead of being exemplified in incident. Then the story pulls itself together, and Aziz goes to a Hindu native State as doctor. All the life there, especially the religious, is beautifully done; but it doesn't seem to relate itself directly to the problem of the previous part of the book. Also there is a stupid and rather improbable misunderstanding as to the marriage of Fielding, the chief pro-Indian character. Aziz thinks F. has married

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Adela and he hasn't. Fielding and Aziz meet. All details are good: but the ensemble is fuzzy, or wuzzy. Although I only finished the book three hours ago, I don't recall now what the purport of the end of the book is.

Lee Mathews brought Komisarjevsky to dinner last night to discuss "The Bright Island", which K. is to produce for the Stage Society. He doesn't look above forty. A nearly bald head. Nervous. Shy. Melancholy. But he soon warmed up under treatment, and I found he could laugh like anything, especially at the amusingness of his own ideas for producing the play. I liked him.

He said he worked under the Soviet for some years. The work was interesting, but the conditions appalling. He had to produce two or three purely propagandist plays each season as a condition of being allowed to work at all. All his household possessions were taken from him. His valuable library was taken and given to some public library. When he got to Western Europe he hadn't a cent or any possession. They talked (he and Lee M.) about some boy-actors that they had seen in London (some Church Guild affair) and how good they were, showing that the Elizabethan stage needn't have lost much by having boy actors. Lee M. said that play-producing by church boys had brought him back into the Church of England, and he now officiated at services—very well indeed. He would.

I was at a private show of Ernest Thesiger's own water-colours at Holy Trinity Rectory yesterday. He is selling them to get money to help the son of a coachman to be a singer. He said: "I heard that man (now twenty-five) sing in the choir yesterday, and I thought how fine it was to be able to help such a voice (baritone) to be brought to perfection and heard by all the world." Well, it is a fine thing, and shows a curious side of Ernest's very complex character.

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Paris 22/6/15

dearer than London. Flat at Mairie over-
looking Mairie. 40 frs. hyperinflation.
Kids had playing ball games. Same impression
in Paris as in London of young men not
in uniform. There are at least 4 weeks here
under age. They may be Swiss. Plenty of
young men in schools.

Called at Cocks to get change. Almost
all shops and desks closed. Nicholson said
that between 30 & 40 had gone home to eat.
Banking & Exchange business good. Travelling
non-existent.

A sprinkling of shops closed in
Rue de la Paix. More on Quai Voltaire.
Martini's. It was rather gay. Madame
looked older. She still dismissed cars.
Male nurse had gone to war. A female in
his place. Immense, & very ugly. Chigi,
Bouvier, there. No further Russian high
command. Both he & Martini talked well.
Madame frankly pessimistic, full of
causes as usual. She said at one time
they had not been able to buy salt, or
cheese. Afterwards I went into a
tobacconist's to get cigarettes. Looked
for lion. 'El n' y en a plus, monsieur

Paris Wednesday 23/6/15

I have yesterday that it was
impossible to leave today for the front.
Sick, foodless, & mass came to lunch
with me. Sick intellectually more than

JOURNAL OF ARNOLD BENNETT

Saturday, January 31st.

Last night with Duff Tayler to "Jitta's Atonement", adapted (nominally 'translated') by Shaw from the play by Trebitsch. Fulham Grand. This play made a very deep impression on both of us. Shaw has taken an obviously conventional and machine-made play of Trebitsch's, left the first act in all its conventional competence, 'situation', and dullness, and then in the 2nd and 3rd Act treated the development of the theme realistically and wittily. The effect is simply electrical. The play wakes up, the artists wake up, and the audience wakes up. Enthusiasm obtains.

The mere idea of starting on a purely conventional 1st Act and then guying it with realism and fun, shows genius. In the other Acts there is some of the most brilliant work, some tender, some brutal, and lots of the most side-splitting fun that Shaw ever did—and he is now approaching seventy, I suppose. The 'hysterics' scene of laughter between the widow and the mistress of the dead man is startlingly original. The confession scene between the mistress and the daughter of the dead man is really beautiful. The fault of Shaw's changes is that the husband of the dead man's mistress, a shallow person in the 2nd Act, quite suddenly in the 3rd Act becomes a wit and a practical social philosopher of the very first order—a Shaw at his finest. There was a very good audience, and any quantity of appreciation and delight. And this in spite of very, very little good acting and a great deal of very bad acting. Nancy Price was the best of them. Frith better than anybody could have hoped for. But then they had something to do, something that *made* them come to life. At this moment Shaw is packing the big Regent Theatre with "St. Joan". And a repertory theatre begins a series of twelve of his plays at the Chelsea Palace next week. At this rate Shaw will soon be nearly as popular in London as he is in Berlin and Vienna.

Monday, February 2nd.

Nolan¹ at lunch yesterday told me, apropos of Burma and the big industrial companies there, that at the end of the war when young ex-officers went over to take posts in, e.g. one of the oil companies, some returned almost immediately, dissatis-

¹ J. J. Nolan (see earlier diaries) had edited the *Rangoon Times*, 1915-20.

fied. Nolan want good seemed to young who faction. O newcomers the language This rule w believe it. not a child. treated as he had com

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fied. Nolan said their attitude was: "We won the war; we want good money and we aren't going to work for it." Nolan seemed to have a slight sub-conscious prejudice against the young who "won the war". He gave instances of dissatisfaction. One was that one of the companies had a rule that newcomers could not join the gymkhana club until they had passed the language test—or at the end of a year, whichever came first. This rule was strongly resented by ex-officers, and I can easily believe it. I should have resented it myself. One said: "I'm not a child. I've led men over the top, etc., etc., and I won't be treated as a child." And he went home by the same boat as he had come in. Others left in two or three months.

It is all very well for the companies to say that an incentive is needed to make the men pass the language test; but this does not seem to me to be the right kind of incentive. Drunkenness is, or was, the great trouble with the young men. Nolan said that the civilians, even if Scotch, thought of nothing but making money, and dismissed all intellectual activities even in the evenings. In the evening they talked business also. He said, and Mrs. Nolan also, that the Burmans were very artistic, naturally so, and you perceived it in everything immediately you entered the country. They used costly 'worked' articles (such as lacquered stuff of high quality) for daily use. Nolan said that the Eurasian problem was growing. They now had to be called (officially) Anglo-Indians. A misnomer, for they were the fruit of all sorts of mixtures, such as e.g., Portuguese and Chinese.

Wednesday, February 4th.

"The Vortex", by Noel Coward, Royalty Theatre. As Pauline Smith was ill, I took Evelyn Forster instead. This play has made a great stir. First Act played 43 minutes, and the first half-hour, and more, was spent in merely creating an atmosphere. Talk whose direction you couldn't follow. No fair hint of plot till nearly the end—and hardly even then. Five unforeseen entrances of important characters. One might have been excused. In 2nd Act, some tiny glimpses of dramatic talent and ingenuities. The end of this Act, where the son plays the piano louder and louder while his mother makes love to a young man, is rather effective, original, and harrowing. The atmosphere of a country-house week-end party is fairly

well got. Technique marred by important characters coming in unperceived and overhearing remarks. The 3rd Act contains the whole of the play, and is in effect a duologue between mother and son. Coward plays the son well, and Lilian Braithwaite gets through the mother as a sort of *tour de force*, but she never gives a convincing picture of an abandoned woman. The end is certainly harrowing to a high degree. But not much effect of beauty. Some smartness in the play, and certainly the germs of an effective dramatic skill; but really I saw nothing that was *true* except in minor details. I dozed off once in the last Act and Evelyn had to waken me.

At Harry Preston's¹ lunch at the Embassy yesterday, Tom Marlowe, editor of the *Daily Mail*, repeated with still more conviction that newspapers had no influence on public opinion.

Friday, February 6th.

I asked Miss Nerney,² who has just typed the 1st Act of my new play, "The Dance Club", if she liked it. She said: "Yes—fairly." She can always be relied upon to say what she thinks about my work. Evidently she did not much care for it. She said: "I don't like it half as much as 'Mr. Prohack'." There's a lot more *in* 'Mr. Prohack' than in the 'Dance Club'." What puzzles me is whether she is put off by the subject (as I believe she is), or whether this is a true artistic judgment according to her standards. This puzzle I shall never solve; she could not solve it herself.

Saturday, February 7th.

I dined at Theodore McKenna's last night. Some time ago, he went to lie down under the light of his violet-ray lamp (equivalent of sunlight or some such thing) over his bed, and went to sleep and stayed under it $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Now the longest time you ought to stay under it is 20 minutes. One or two skins were burnt off. He could scarcely talk, or eat. His tongue shrivelled and hard. He was all black. Even the ear which was pressed on the pillow was burnt; the sweet influences of Pleiades had gone right through his head. He went to the office for three days—no pain for a day—but then had to go to bed and didn't get out of the house for a month. (He then had to go

¹ The well-known sportsman and hotel proprietor. See earlier diaries.

² Arnold Bennett's secretary.

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FEBRUARY 6-FEBRUARY 24, 1925

to America on business, and afterwards to Smyrna.) Said to be a unique case; in the *Lancet* this week or next.

Monday, February 9th.

Met Lord Haldane again Sunday night at Colefax's. He seemed to be in a continual state of bland amusement—mildly diverted by everything. He gave a long account of passages between Gortchakoff, Bismarck, and Beaconsfield, at the Berlin Conference when Dizzy ordered a special train for home, and this so frightened Gortchakoff, as a kind of ultimatum, that G. arranged to get a special order from his Imperial master countermanding first order (for a port in the Ægean for the enlarged Bulgaria). Haldane said this account had never been printed and differed from the accepted account. But I can't help thinking I had read it before. Yet he seems to be an accurate man. He was very agreeable. Rather apt to go into a bit too much detail in his accounts of things.

Performance of "Henry IV, Part II," by Fellowship Players last night at the Regent Theatre. This was very good indeed on the whole. The performance of Hay Petrie in the small part of Silena was simply amazing. I never saw anything better. There is hope for acting. (Also Shakespeare is just about as good as his reputation.)

Thursday, February 12th.

Taylor and I went into "Mother Goose" pantomime at the Hippodrome last night. A melancholy interior, not giving any effect of gaiety. Everything poor and second rate, except the grace of Isobel Elsom perhaps. Tedious! Tedious! Ugly! Yet I suppose this is just the sort of thing we used to admire at Drury Lane in the far past. But the worst part of the affair is the drab, dull, or silly, or stupid audience—comprising many provincials. How they laughed at the feeblest jokes, and broke into uncontrollable applause before the end of the most ordinary stunts.

Tuesday, February 24th.

I had *une espèce de grippe* all last week and wrote nothing whatever. Dorothy returned from Italy. The first (of two) performances of "The Bright Island" took place at the Aldwych

Theatre on Sunday, 15th. The play was coldly received on both Sunday and Monday. The points were not seen by that portion of the audience which applauds. Yet the play had succeeded at rehearsals. Many people thought it amusing and true. I think that for one thing the audience was bewildered at the start by the strangeness of the scene, the "Commedia dell' arte" names of the characters, and the political quality of the plot. Also by the even-handed rigour dealt out to both political parties. The Press, with the sole exception of *Truth*, who liked it and praised it and said it ought to be revived before a "more intelligent audience", slanged it like anything. Not partially, but wholly. Some said that I ought to be stopped from writing such plays, a great mistake, deplorable, and so on. It was the worst Press any play of mine ever had.

Fjellsted¹ told me on Saturday a story of how trouble may be caused by indiscretion. The story was told to him by a patient, a J.P., and it happened to two of the J.P.'s friends. One of these two had a splendid car, and the two went out for a drive. They overtook two nurses from a nursing home, and offered them a lift, which was accepted. They came to London (I think). The four met again in the evening. Later one of the nurses found herself pregnant. She did not even know the name of her lover; but he had told her that a well-known surgeon had performed a rather peculiar operation on him. She went to the surgeon and actually got the man's name and address. She then wrote to her lover, and mentioned the other man and the other girl sufficiently for people who knew the circle to identify them, and told him of her condition. The letter to the lover was opened by the lover's daughter (one of those careless go-as-you-please households where everybody casually opens everybody else's letters). The daughter showed the letter to her mother. The mother identified the friend and went and told the friend's wife. Finally she went to the nursing home and denounced the second girl, who was dismissed. Only it happened that she denounced the wrong girl, and the wrong girl brought an action for damages, and damages had to be paid. Also of course the lover had to pay for his illegitimate child—£1 a week. To say nothing of the horrid mess in the two homes. The moral is, don't pick up girls when you are motoring, and, if you see a girl, don't be picked up. Also if

¹ The masseur who attended Arnold Bennett.

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FEBRUARY 24-MARCH 10, 1925

you let a man seduce you, get at any rate his name and address. But chiefly, have an absolute rule in your home that your letters are to be opened by nobody but yourself.

Monday, March 9th.

The embracing qualities of revue seem to be more and more in evidence. I saw Ernest Thesiger last night at Hubert Griffiths' war play "Tunnel Trench". I knew he was to play in a revue (of Cochran's, Noel Coward's, etc.). What surprised me was that he should pass about six weeks in the country playing it before London—he who never plays out of London. He has left the Dauphin in "St. Joan" to go and play in revue. At the "Tunnel Trench" party afterwards on the stage of Prince's Theatre I saw Margaret Halstan, who was the original Emily in "What the Public Wants". Hadn't seen her for years. The next moment I was talking to Haidée Wright, said to be our greatest tragic actress, and the real star of "Milestones". She said *she* had been asked to play in revue. She had inquired what she would have to do in the revue and the reply was that she would have to be an old woman in rags and try to ride a bicycle and fall off it, and that was all. So she refused revue.

Tuesday, March 10th.

Sloane Street up from Pont Street to the bottom; a shade under half a mile I suppose. Curious fact; they are laying a pipe, or rather six pipes, earthenware, all in one, and I have never had enough curiosity to ask what this pipe is, and why it should be in six divisions. I think it must be water, as I often see an official "Turncock" strolling about. But the incuriosity is the interesting thing. The street is being repaired (wood) very rapidly and very well and very noisily. The noise of about a dozen drills (for boring out and breaking up the concrete) is awful. Men live in it all day, and those who use the drills have their hands vibrated all day. The whole thing is a "perfect hive", and a wonderful scene. Part of the street was totally up and repaved about two years ago, or less. Why this so soon duplication of work? Another instance of the amateurishness and 'loose-limbedness' of London government.

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Wednesday, March 11th.

"Spring Cleaning" at St. Martin's Theatre, by Fred Lonsdale, last night, as guest of Castlerosse, with D. House full. House full every night. There is a lot of wit in this play, and the opening scene, wherein a lot of decadents and homo-sexuals, etc., come in to the hero's house for cocktails is very ingenious and well managed. Afterwards there is nothing that seems real, save an odd remark. The 'great' scene in the 2nd Act where the hero introduces a prostitute to his wife's dinner party is not in the least convincing, and the prostitute (well played by Cathleen Nesbitt) is like no prostitute that ever was. All the 2nd Act is absurd. The 3rd Act, scenes between husband and lover chiefly, is equally false, but it is saved, partly, by some fine lines and by Ronald Squire's acting as the lover. This Act owes everything to Squire. On the whole perhaps not a totally wasted evening. But I don't know. If the play runs for a long time I shall be surprised. I should think it would peter out unexpectedly. My theory is that a play which pretends to be serious and is not will not run for very long though it may make a great splash at the start. A spurious play may run if it is dull and all alike. However, the whole subject is very complicated.

Thursday, March 12th.

The head of the little dancing school, where I am daily being taught to dance, came in to watch me being taught yesterday. He said to me: "What you want is courage, decision. Don't be afraid of 'em (women). Remember they have to do what you want. You've got 'em. And it's the only time you have got 'em."

Friday, March 13th.

Swinnerton told with more detail yesterday the story of his birth. He said: "I was born in the drawing-room, and only my mother and I were present." The nurse came in later, and said: "Oh, of course he's dead." His mother questioned if he was dead. The nurse repeated: "Yes, he's dead. He must be dead." He also told how he was at the funeral of Victor Hugo. He was carried there, at the age of 1 year, in the arms of his mother, or someone.

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MARCH 11-MARCH 21, 1925

Monday, March 16th.

A 6½-hour-night last night after a week or so of bad nights. Well, I was in a high state of nerves yesterday. Barrie and Eliz. Lucas were dining at Savoy Café last night, and afterwards he took D. and me with Eliz. back to his flat. He said an extraordinary thing had happened to him. A man who had never written a play before sent him a r-act play, which he, Barrie, passed on with a strong letter of recommendation to a management, which management accepted it the next day, and is to produce it next month. I showed Barrie my praise of the last act of "Dear Brutus" in yesterday's *Observer*. He agreed with my remarks on the easy-ness of 1st Acts. He said a play of his of which only the 1st Act was good was "What Every Woman Knows". He said he wrote that Act in two days. The 2nd Act took weeks, and the 3rd Act took months.

Saturday, March 21st.

We were at Lady Colefax's supper to meet John Barrymore on Thursday night. There were no Asquiths there. Asquiths seemed to occupy all the boxes on the 1st night of Barrymore's "Hamlet" at the Haymarket. Also they were photographed in their boxes. Barrymore, at the supper (where he arrived after 1 a.m.), seemed to be partly exhausted. He looked distinguished but didn't talk distinguished. During songs he closed his eyes and seemed to sleep. Then he exclaimed: "Oh, for some Cointreau!" very urgently, and it was brought quickly to him. He is very shrewd and perspicacious.

Well, we left the Colefax's supper party at 2.40 S. C. told me she went to bed at 5. She was called up at 8 on the 'phone by Irene Curzon who told her that Curzon¹ had died at 5 a.m. and could S. come to her at once. S. went.

S. said that one of the shocks of her life occurred when, at the supper party given by Lord and Lady Oxford on the first night of Elizabeth Bibesco's play, "The Painted Swan", photographers were brought in to photograph! Private house. The host said that Elizabeth's health and the health of her play must be proposed. But nobody would propose it (no doubt shyness). Finally papa proposed it. S. recounted a very characteristic saying of Lady Oxford's on seeing an attractive hat:

¹ Lord Curzon.

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"That's a hat to go to a concert half an hour late in." Asquithian all over.

Monday, March 23rd.

T. Bodkin came to lunch on Saturday. As to the language question in Ireland he said that the language law would entail a lot of extra work on schoolchildren, who already of course had more subjects than they could cope with. He said that the official language for Parliamentary Bills was Gaelic, and that they were issued with an English translation; but the amendments were proposed and passed only in English. Also that there are three varieties of Gaelic spoken by three different small mutually-distant groups of people,—as widely different (he said) as Normand from Provençal; and that which variety should be used had not yet been officially decided. Also that the Gaelic vocabulary was absurdly inadequate for modern needs, and that many words had to be invented.

Bodkin said that his wife, being an ardent Catholic, went into a retreat for a few days every year. The last time the spiritual adviser enjoined her on leaving to get and read three books, (1) some work (I forget) of St. Benedict, (2) Thomas à Kempis, and (3) "How to live on 24 hours a day". Bodkin understood that one reason for including the latter was that I advocated a time set apart for reflection.

Tuesday, March 24th.

"No, No, Nanette" at the Palace Theatre last night. This is supposed to be the most popular musical-comedy of modern time. Edgar Selwyn saw it in Chicago, and praised it very highly. It contains three or four extremely catchy jazz tunes. Also Binnie Hale—who is young, has style, charm, and is a very good dancer—for a star. It also contains Joseph Coyne, who is simply admirable, and George Grossmith, who is good. These two together on the stage do admirably funny scenes. It also contains some women who are competent or a bit more. The music is "catchy". It is perhaps the best musical comedy I ever saw.

Thursday, March 26th.

I was walking in Selfridge's basement yesterday afternoon, idling between two appointments, when I met Selfridge in rather old

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morning suit and silk hat. He at once seized hold of me and showed me over a lot of the new part of his store. Cold-storage for furs—finest in the world. Basement hall 550 feet long. Sub-basement with a very cheap restaurant where they serve 3,000 to 4,000 customers a day. He introduced me to the head of his baby-linen department saying: "Here is a gentleman wants things for three of his children, one is three months, another ten months, and another a year old." Then up his own private lift to the offices and his room, where I had to scratch my name with a diamond on the window—with lots of others. He showed me a lot of accounting. Then downstairs to book department. Fine bindings, etc. His first remark was, taking up a book: "Human skin." I had to hurry away. He kept on insisting that it was wonderfully interesting. And it *was*.

Saturday, April 4th.

Yesterday afternoon, after parting with Edgar Selwyn and promising to write a play with him in the summer, I went to the special matinée of the Academy of Dramatic Art at the New Theatre. The judges for the Gold Medal were in two boxes: Bancroft, du Maurier, and Gladys Cooper, etc. Pinero, Loraine, Matheson Lang—a frightening array for the students. What struck me most was the badness of the *producing* of the playlets given. It was all bad and much of it very bad.

Monday, April 6th.

Some weeks ago Mrs. S. M. recommended to me some anti-fat pills made and sold by a chemist at Nice. The course was six boxes. I got the six boxes from Nice and began. Mrs. S. M. positively assured me that they were quite harmless and very effective. After I had taken a little more than two boxes, I began to notice that I perspired very freely and also was short-winded after any exertion. Also that my heart made a too loud noise and was rather irregular. So much so that I could not sleep on my left side on account of the thumping row. Fjellsted, my masseur, told me my heart had been affected by something—he thought it was due to veronal, of which I had taken one dose for insomnia. (By the way my sleep grew heavier but much more broken, and no better as regards total quantity.) I hadn't and haven't told him about the anti-fat pills as his feeling against all pills is so strong.

JOURNAL OF ARNOLD BENNETT

I then sent for Dr. Griffin. He examined me and said my heart was organically quite all right, but that it had been upset by the pills and that I must at once cease to take them. He came a second time on Sunday, and said that the improvement, though noticeable, was very slight. I still have to walk upstairs very slowly and to avoid any physical strain. Dr. Griffin had the pills analysed. The analysis on the box (in accordance with French law) says: "Iodothyrene", "Hypophyse", "Surrenales", and "Génesiques". He said that the quantity of thyroid (cheap) was larger than in the formula, while the other things (more expensive) were less than in the formula on the box. He said that I oughtn't to take medicines without consulting him. And of course he is quite right. It is perfectly staggering the idiotic things even a wise man will do.

Tuesday, April 7th.

Max Beerbohm, with others, dined here last night. I hadn't seen him for ten years (at the Reform Club). He was more delightful than ever. His mind is sound right through; and he is often witty. Some people have told me that he would dine out and say nothing but the most ordinary things. Last night he said scarcely anything ordinary. He was unaffected, modest, and thoroughly wise, and made a great impression on everybody. After the Maughams and the Parsons had gone he expanded even more to Kathleen Long, Dorothy, and me. I asked him what kind of cigarette he preferred, Eastern or Western. He said it didn't matter. He just took whatever came. He didn't care about many things, and as soon as he owned something that he had wanted it ceased to please him.

His age proved to be 52, whereas mine was 58 in May next. He said he *wanted* to be 58—every year was a conquest. He did *not* envy young people; in fact he felt sorry for them. Their lives also were precarious. They might die any day, and if they did die—what a suck-in for them! How much they would have missed—without knowing it. He said he had no feeling for London. He liked to visit it, but only on the condition that he could leave it and return to Rapallo. He said that he couldn't possibly have the romantic feeling for London that I have, because he was born in it. "The smuts fell on his bassinette." Whereas *I* could never lose the feeling of the romanticalness of London. He told me that I was in his new

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series of "Old Celebrities meeting their younger selves", shortly to be seen at the Leicester Galleries. The legend under the drawing of me was:

Old A. B. Everything worked out according to plan.

Young A. B. *My* plan.

What a depth and width of criticism of me in this!

Good Friday, April 10th.

On Wednesday John Barrymore came to lunch with S. C. and Dorothy. He was Bohemianly and shabbily dressed. He remarked at once on my pictures, was much struck with the dining-room, picked out the interesting things in it at once, and when we went upstairs he said it was the most beautiful house he'd been in in London. He liked the odd little stairway leading to nothing on the first floor. This I suppose was characteristic of him. He looked tired and plain, but talked with the full beauty of his voice, was very masculine and powerful, and very friendly and responsive. Of course he is used to talking. He talked admirably, full of ideas which he expresses very picturesquely. He has read a lot.

What was interesting was the way in which he regarded all plays from the acting or actor's point of view. This seemed quite natural and proper. He wants plays in the grand manner of romance and emotion. I could see what he wanted, and had a desire to write it. Dorothy mentioned "Don Juan". He said he was glad that that had been brought up, and that he would now like to play it. He refused it last year because he had been playing showy womanising parts too much and wanted a change into something classical or more austere. He several times said he was too tired to do anything, but he seemed very well and strong, apart from that. The next day the Haymarket Theatre had to be closed, and he was laid aside with a bad throat.

Barrymore said that the German people who wanted him to go to Berlin told him that his company would not be good enough for Berlin, and he would have to change it. He rather agreed with this verdict on them. Said they were all too gentlemanly and afraid of being not-gentlemanly. He said that the U.S.A. was the worst place to live in in the whole world, and that he liked to play in England better than anywhere. He inquired whether it would be possible for him to make a living in England.

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Tuesday, April 14th.

D. and I dined at the Café Royal (in the café) on Easter Sunday night. I hadn't dined in that room for years. It seems to have come through all the changes and rebuildings of architectures and times with scarcely a change. The whole atmosphere was almost, you'd think, just as when Henri Rochefort was there daily. Fine wine. Cigars in A1 condition. I saw a very arty-or studio-ish figure there and couldn't think who it was. Tall, thin, bearded; brown clothes, black tie, red handkerchief. As soon as I shook hands with him, I remembered. Darrell Figgis.¹ He was cheerful, with a background of melancholy. He comes over on journalistic business, stays at the R.A. Club in order to have a swim in the morning, and generally eats at the Café Royal. There he was all alone on Easter Sunday evening, reading an American collection of short stories by post-war Russian authors. All very characteristic.

I asked him to come to our table later. He did. He talked merely at intervals, but is rather provincial in his method of referring to himself and what he has done and what he has said. Dublin is very provincial. He agreed with my harsh verdict on A.E., etc. He was wearing fine rings. Perhaps two of them were his wife's.

Thursday, April 16th.

Temple introduced yesterday, at Reform Club, a young fellow named Scripps. Father is proprietor of a 'chain' of thirty evening newspapers from the Atlantic to the Pacific. He said that the aims of Ku-Klux-Klan were different in different States. In some they were anti-catholic merely, e.g. others were anti-nigger. All Scripps' papers were anti-Klan. He had received threatening letters from Klansmen but nothing had ever happened to him. In some Southern States bullets had been fired through windows, but nobody hit and nobody took any notice. In one town, a strike of their street boys had been engineered through the boys' parents, and it had halved their circulation for a time, especially as the boys 'route-books' (with names and addresses where papers had to be delivered) had been nefariously burnt.

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¹ Irish author and politician.

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had to vote Democrat because of course they couldn't vote Republican. Hence if a Democrat candidate got only five more States in addition to the Southern, he had a fair chance of winning. The Scripps papers had run Le Follette for the Presidency at the last show. Very great opposition to him, but it had not cost them anything in circulation. Scripps seemed a decent family sort of a young man, belonging to a 'house' of some sort—in this case a newspaper house—with traditions behind him. He showed sense when I asked him how K.-K.-Klan was to be put out of existence and he answered: "Oh, I expect it will just die out."

Saturday, April 18th.

Lees-Smith¹ lunched with Glynn Williams and me at the Reform yesterday. He told me a lot of things about the Labour Party. He said that Wheatley was no good, had no mind, and would probably do no more. I had thought he had no mind. I asked him about the causes of the fall of Ramsay MacDonald.² He said he was very able, industrious, educated, travelled, and could make a good speech at an hour's notice on anything. He was cautious rather than sagacious. He said one of his chief faults was that he could not delegate anything. He must do everything himself, even to telephoning.

Lees-Smith was at Chequers on the first day of R. M.'s office as P.M. and he said that on that day R. M. always answered the telephone himself. Another fault was that he in practice looked on all jobs as equally important, could not differentiate between them. He said that at the beginning of the week when R. M. fell (the critical debate was on a Wednesday I think) R. M. had not decided his policy. Owing to Trade Union Congress and things he had only the Monday morning in which to think out his policy; and he spent the whole of that morning in a second meeting of a Committee about the Dawes plan, which Lees-Smith himself thought it scarcely worth while to attend. He said that R. M. had four times the energy of an ordinary man and that his looks had helped him a great deal.

¹ Subsequently minister in the Labour Government, 1929-31.

² The First Labour Government had been defeated in November, 1924, after a few months in power.

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Thursday, April 23rd.

Three first nights this week.

"The Torch Bearers" by George Kelly (U.S.A.).

"Fallen Angels" by Noel Coward.

"Ariadne" by A. A. Milne.

These plays played about two hours each; the first rather less than two hours. All were light, artificial, conventional, not true to any kind of life, and fundamentally old fashioned. Marie Tempest was astoundingly fine and finished in the first. As for the second, I had been saying for weeks that Tallulah Bankhead couldn't act, and she gave a superb comedy performance. (She would not have been much good in Maugham's "Rain".) I usually hate Fay Compton on the stage. Yet she was admirable in Milne's play. On each night I was in the main bored—perhaps least at the first play. Asked to describe Coward's play by Mrs. Theodore McKenna, I said: "It is a piece of damned cheek." So it is. She fully agreed. Still, I rather like him putting two drunken young women on the stage. It prepares the way for a more serious realism, and it helps to tear off the tulle rags of chivalry, etc., which is all to the good.

Saturday, April 25th.

Talking of sleeping, at the Embassy Club last night Lord Ashfield said that his habit was to go to bed at 11, be *in* bed by 11.30, and to read till 1 o'clock. He slept four hours; then was awakened by asthma and had to treat it, and then slept for another 3 hours. He had to be ready to meet his heads of departments at 9 a.m. He said he had never been able to find a cure for asthma. Going out, we met Luigi, who was saying to someone that the entrance fee to his club was £21 and the annual sub. £8 8s. I said I never paid for my night clubs. He said "But you shall be an honorary member. I shall be delighted." He said the same to Ashfield, and gave us forms. It was funny to see a survival on these forms "Name of Regiment". Good God!

Monday, April 27th.

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2. The tickets for the first performance of Cochran's Revue "On with the Dance" are priced at 27s. This arose through a mistake in reading handwriting. The price was really 24s. The tickets were printed and many of them were sold, and nobody in authority noticed the mistake. Then Cochran decided that the higher price should remain. Many had paid 27s. by error. The rest should pay the same. How characteristically theatrical this mistake, the negligence, the ultimate solution.

Tuesday, April 28th.

I went to Chinatown last night with Beaverbrook and Ashfield. Pennyfields is the name of the chief street, Limehouse. We went to the Limehouse Police Station first. It took us exactly fifteen minutes to drive there from Ciro's. Great change in a short time. We saw some "curios" (as the Chief Inspector called them) first. Explanation of "Fantan" and "Pluck Pigeons". The first seems a purely childish game in which the bank pays 2 to 1 winnings on a 4 to 1 chance.

Then out with the Inspector to Pennyfields. No gambling after 8 o'clock, he said, usually not later than 7. We entered two Chinese restaurants (11 p.m.) where lots of people were drinking tea. Humble people. All very clean and tidy indeed, and the people looked decent. A few nice-looking prostitutes—chiefly Jewesses. Nearly all houses closed. Some windows, said the Chief Inspector, were always shuttered. "They don't like the light." Glimpses of curtained bedrooms higher up. We went into a Chinese Music Club, where four men were playing Mah Jong and one strumming a sort of Chinese guitar, with very large string-pegs. Their singing nights were Wednesday and Saturday. A suggestion that they should sing was not well received. They were very polite but didn't want us. We were to have seen the Chinese Chapel, where the religion of Confucius is practised; but it was locked up.

Then we went into a pub (closed) and found one or two old toppers (friends of proprietor's) drinking stout after hours. We were taken upstairs and there saw a wonderful collection of Chinese carving of all sorts—chiefly picked up from sailors. Lastly, return to police station. No prisoners. Cells marvelously clean and sanitary. Steam heating. Temp. must be 63 at least. Plank bed, white as a yacht's fore-castle, but a pretty

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comfortable pillow: one rug. On the whole a rather flat night. Still we saw the facts. We saw no vice whatever. Inspector gave the Chinese an exceedingly good character.

Wednesday, April 29th.

Noel Coward lunched with me yesterday and answered all my arguments in criticism of "Fallen Angels". He said that he wrote it in five days, and "The Vortex" in four days (or three). When he once began, he worked straight through. He showed much intelligence. He said he meant to write a *really* good play, and a *really* good novel. He has a little house in Majorca, where he is going with his mother. And in the Autumn to play in "The Vortex" in New York. I was pleased with him.

Thursday, April 30th.

B. N. Opera Co. last night at Golders Green Hippodrome. Drove there in taxi. It was like arriving in the centre of a big town. Flat performance of "At the Boar's Head" by Holst, and "Gianni Schicchi". Much of the music of the former lovely. But the whole conception wrong. Wells said to me: "The idea of it is fundamentally stupid. The dialogue was complete before Holst began even to touch it." It was ridiculous to set it to music. Much of the acting rotten. Dame Quickly particularly. Wrong notion of character. Doll Tearsheet a bit better, but too plain and dull for a stage whore, though she corresponded with the reality of lots of whores. "Gianni Schicchi" rather better, but the hero was played dully. When we came out not a taxi. Buses flying off packed. We got on to a bus (top) and waited five minutes before it started. Then changed to a taxi near Marlborough Road. Home here soon after 11. Everything was interesting except the performances.

Monday, May 11th.

On Friday, at lunch at the Vineyard, I had my first long serious detailed talk with Max Beaver¹ about political material for my novel "Lord Raingo". It lasted just 1½ hours. He was marvellously effective and efficient. He didn't need to be told what sort of stuff I wanted. And he gave way at once when he was on the wrong tack—for me. He has exactly the right sort of imagination, and a very powerful and accurate one. He can

¹ Lord Beaverbrook.

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invent pieces of plot to fit certain incidents, and is just as interested and as effectual in the matter of women as in the matter of politics. I got an immense amount of stuff. So that was all right.

Yesterday afternoon I taxi-ed up to see Barnsbury, so well spoken of as a curiosity by W. Whitten. It is a curiosity. The Sphinxes and little Cleopatra needles in front of the porticoes of a long row of houses in Richmond Rd. are too marvellous. There is quite a lot of other Empire ornament round about here. Barnsbury Square is very good. And so is Malvern Terrace. The taxi and D. and I attracted attention, and while we were strolling around a nice polite (and no doubt curious) boy (Jewish) came up and asked me if I wanted "Miss Galway's house". It never occurred to me to ask who Miss Galway was. I should have liked to know.

Tuesday, May 12th.

Opening of the "most magnificent dance club in the world", the Kitcat, last night. I took D. and we met Donald Calthrop and Miss Adair, Harry Preston, John Leigh, etc., etc. For an opening night (it had, however, been opened to the Press the night before) it went very smoothly. Packed with people who had dined there. Ventilation much lauded in the prospectus, but the side room in which we took refuge for drinks, and which was nearly empty, was as hot as hell and the waiter said there was no ventilation in there. Floor and balconies all crowded, and people standing all round the balconies trying to see down into the ball-room and not succeeding. To see this space crammed with dancers who could only sway to and fro, to hear the row of the Vincent Lopez £1,100 a week band from New York, and the other lower noises—gave you the impression that the bottom had fallen out of civilisation.

Friday, May 15th.

Dinner of "The Other Club"¹ last night in Pinafore Room, Savoy. Birkenhead got across the subject of Marie Stopes, and said that he called "Married Love" disgusting, etc. He referred to L. C. J. Hewart. He said you couldn't go on Circuit for years without acquiring a certain breadth of mind and that Hewart had that mind. If you wanted to talk about the amours

¹ See Volume II, page 207.

of a goatherd and his charge, Hewart would talk with you, but equally he would talk about anything else. Birkenhead kept on about Marie Stopes. He had no reasonable arguments, and everything (nearly) he said on the subject was either specious or silly; but he phrased his matter well. He never gave in.

Later I was talking to Lutyens who was in one of his fantastic veins. He took up the subject of whales. He said whales were nice respectable animals, warm blooded, had breasts and things and loved their young deeply, and that they could certainly be tamed—they would do anything for food—and used as draught animals. He drew marvellous pictures of the King and Queen being drawn down the Thames in the Royal barge by a team of whales who had been fed on tomatoes or something, to make them spout red. He said we had wasted whales, and the species was being extinguished. He was really very inventive, imaginative, and funny over this fantasy.

Sunday, May 31st.

Lack of entries during the past fortnight is due to visits to Oxford to the Keebles¹ (week-end) and to Torquay to Phillpotts' (three days; to work on libretto of a comic opera with him), and to simultaneity of beginning a new novel "Lord Raingo" and the beginning of the German Opera season at Covent Garden. The novel began with great vim on May 13th and went well. But the change of habits due to opera, and sundry odd articles that I had to do gradually sapped the vim.

I went to the opera three times, "Rosenkavalier", "Tristan" and "Valkyrie". In each case the damned thing begins at 7-7.15 and ends at 11.20 or 11.25. You can only have high tea first, and then you must go out to supper afterwards. Natural fatigue of 4½ hours great music, plus *dérangement* of habits causing indigestion causing insomnia—and there you are.

I liked the three operas much better than ever, and stand more impressed than ever by the bigness of Wagner. I used to be overawed by the mere achievement, apart from its creative force. Now I am not. After all, creatively, these operas are very simple, and the artist is tied by scarcely anything in them. He is in an ideal world. He hasn't got to think of half so many things as a novelist in a long realistic novel. The hardest mere

¹ Sir Frederick and Lady Keeble (Lillah McCarthy) were old friends of Arnold Bennett.



ARNOLD BENNETT AND DOROTHY CHESTON BENNETT

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'work' is the scoring, and many composers could and do score with far more complexity than Wagner. Still, the power and the beauty of Wagner are staggering. There was great singing.

The yachting season. Everyone has been predicting a fine summer on the strength of a warm May. The *Marie Marguerite*¹ was to have left the Colne to meet me at Southampton, last Wednesday. It began to blow a S.W. half gale—gale on Wednesday morning, and it has been blowing the same ever since. She had not left the Colne last night.

Tuesday, June 2nd.

Yesterday I began on the political part of "Lord Raingo", and had to go cautiously. But I did 1,200 words, with increasing confidence. A heavy day's work anyhow. Olga Lynn brought Rudolf Kommer, Reinhardt's right hand, for tea. He wanted to see me. He told me some things I didn't know or had forgotten. He said that "The Great Adventure" had been produced in Vienna and failed—owing to production. Also published in book form in Berlin.

Wednesday, June 3rd.

Rudolf Kommer said on Monday that though the actors were better in Germany and Austria than in England, nobody there could play "the English gentleman" as quietly as it ought to be played, and that I should find all performances of my plays "noisy". He spoke of "English gentlemen" with great admiration and respect, as of something unattainable. He also said that "The Pretty Lady" was on a plane by itself, the finest war novel—"with nothing of the war spirit in it". "A wonderful idea seeing London life in war through the eyes of a French cocotte."

Monday, June 22nd.

On Saturday I returned from 17 days' yachting. Not two minutes' rain in the whole time.

To-night "The Cherry Orchard" is transferred from the Lyric, Hammersmith, to the Royalty. This I think marks a definite turn in public taste towards true plays. I have been remarking this turn for some years, but managers seem to be quite blind to it.

¹ Arnold Bennett's yacht.

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When Fagan produced "The Cherry Orchard" for us at the Lyric, we thought it ought to be done but did not believe in it. The first performance was splendidly received. But we did not believe in it. On the Thursday after the first performance (Monday) none of us believed in it, and Fagan met the directors and agreed without argument that the thing was a failure. But a few days later he was believing in it (by reason of the enthusiasm of small audiences), but the returns were still awful, and the loss heavy. Then the returns enormously improved. Loss became a profit, and to-night this most disconcerting and original play is going in a sort of triumph to the West End, where no manager would have looked at it a month ago. All this is owing to N. Playfair having seen it done at Oxford, and being firmly backed by me in his desire to have it done at the Lyric.

Wednesday, June 24th.

When I saw the above play again at the Royalty on Monday, in a by no means full and rather apathetic and not at all first-night audience, I was struck still more by the power and beauty of the play. I remember Jacques Copeau coming to me during the Stage Society performance of "The Brothers Karamazov" in a state of nervous gloom and exclaiming: "Ces malheureux artistes!" and asking me why I hadn't warned him or done something; whereas I didn't know anything about the performance.

The revival of "The Beggar's Opera" last night at the Lyric, Hammersmith, was an affair of *prodigious enthusiasm*, and well done in some ways. Here is an absolutely English thing, understood by English artists, and done by them excellently well so far as the limitations of their gifts would allow. The music is lovely, heavenly sometimes, and the dialogue always brilliant. Also it is daring and bawdy, with robust ideas about life. This is in my opinion one of the most wonderful entertainments I have ever seen.

Salzburg, Thursday, July 9th.

As soon as we had got into Germany¹ (Kehl, I think, about 4.30 a.m. yesterday) the country began to be German, quite conventionally. There is no doubt you can get a more intimate

¹ Late in June Arnold Bennett started on a tour in Germany and Austria.

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and romantic view of a strange country early in the morning. You then know when people actually get up, and what they look like when they are up. Putting bedclothes out at windows. Pensive girls at windows. Men and boys loitering in lanes, and waiting to begin to work. A curious softness and humanness over everything. Sudden increase in Germany of official uniforms. The railways seemed to have got back to decency and efficiency. Munich. Great lakes and mountains east of Munich. Wonderful to regard ; and, with thin tapering spires of churches, quite conventionally German. The German of opera scenery. Sunday when we got into Salzburg,—Tyrolean hats and garments. It seemed comic—nature imitating art.

Saturday, July 11th.

I have not seen a well-dressed person in this lovely town. Day before yesterday we went up a lift to the "Café-Wein" Restaurant on a mound of the Mönchberg. It is just opposite my window on the other side of the river but about 300 yards farther down. The lift takes about a minute and in that minute a marvellous change has taken place. You see the entire town at your feet, and the surrounding country gets itself into proper proportion. The centre of the town is a mass of domes and towers, which I have certainly not yet unravelled. We dined at the said Café-Wein restaurant, but indoors because it began to rain, and rained heavily and kept on raining with one short surcease, which we used to get down again in. I reckon the current of the river is doing 4 knots all the time. In flood it must do a lot more. A few punts are tied up to the banks here and there, doubtless for transport, but how they are manœuvred I can't guess. Much of the baroque architecture is fine. The Mozart House is a lovely building. Something in the nature of an artistic manifestation is always going on. Concerts daily, somewhere. "Die Fledermaus" last night. The "Don Cossack" choir to-night. A Mozart evening (up at another hill café) on Thursday night. Also a circus at times. There seems not to be a single decent drapery shop in the town. I mean of the women's kind. The dresses of the women attest this. It is really a very remarkable fact.

Wednesday, July 15th.

Saturday night we went to the Stadt Theatre, and saw a Viennese

'*schmuurre*', a farce of military life. Couldn't understand it, but it seemed to be pretty well put together. The production was far far better than our average West End production. It was more naturalistic, less conventional, and more continuously alive. Some of the acting was very good.

The scenery around is wonderful. There must be about a dozen 10,000 ft. mountains in the region. But we soon tired of this imposing, picturesque scenery. It is as if it was done on purpose—some *tour de force* of a creator. Sunday was a fête day here. The fête of the fire brigades. They came from all around, including adjacent Germany. The café-restaurants were full of firemen, in poor ill-fitting uniforms, at lunch. Procession very long. Full of engines and ladders, and one very old engine, and banners and bands. One brigade was headed by a girl in white; at least she seemed to be a girl; but she might have been the wife of the huge framed glittering man who was walking by her side. The affair had a certain mediæval or renaissance quality, but lacked both vitality and efficiency. After it we drove in a little victoria to see the castle (Lustschloss) at Hellbrun, a few miles off, along a monotonous road chiefly quite straight. This castle has lovely gardens; but the 'practical joke' quality of the fountain-work (designed to soak the king's guests by surprise) and the childishness of the working, water-driven models in the gardens, gave you a sinister insight into the mind of a foolish king.

Much work in mornings. I am reading Hamsun's "Segelfoss Town". It is not his best work, but contains very fine things indeed, and is never sentimental. I read some of Robert Bridges's poems again, including the one containing the line "The horses of the strong south west", which has remained in my mind for many years. It is a superb short poem. Yesterday was what I call a full day, after a rotten night. I didn't get up till 8 o'clock; then breakfast; by 11.15 I had written 950 words of the novel. I then dressed and went out to recover, to reflect, and to find a new restaurant. We lunched at the new restaurant. Back to hotel to sleep, read, and tea. Then by the giant lift to the Café-Wein Restaurant on the Mönchberg; walked on the said berg for a long time (acutely picturesque). Then descended by the lift and to St. Peter's Keller for dinner; place crowded. Then to hotel for tickets for theatre, and to "The Blue Bird" (Russian troupe as in London) at Stadt Theatre. Some of it very good; a little of it magnificent.

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Thursday, July 16th.

Walked up to the top of the Kapuzinerberg yesterday afternoon. The entrance begins only about three minutes from this hotel (Oesterreichischerhof), and the distance of climbing is only about a mile I should think. But it is very stiff work indeed. The path is stepped and tended and signposted with great Teutonic care and thoroughness. Some English say it is too well done. How absurd! (In the war we copied everything but German thoroughness—I mean in the press.) These signposts indicating distances in time are most useful. At the top (it took me an hour with frequent rests) a café, *tout arrangé*, for tourists, with 'fine' views of Alps. These *aussichts* of Alpine stuff leave me definitely rather cold. Visited the Kurhaus on the way back to the hotel. Vast and gloomy—especially the restaurant where an 'Alpine evening' was to take place last night. Feared it and avoided it, and dined at the Mirabell Garden Restaurant where also I had lunched. At lunch, Jerskny, director of the Blue Bird troupe had a table, with several of his artists; they were extremely jolly and giggled like anything. At night: music. Waltzes and operatic selections. Electric light; hence theatrical trees; dogs playing with each other; outsiders staring; girls carrying beer all the time; a girl wheeling round and round a thing like a perambulator containing all sorts of confectionery; she did this for two hours and was still doing it when I left. I finished Hamsun's "Segelfoss Town" last night. It does not hold together very well, and is inferior to his best work; the interest is allowed to shift too much from character to character. The characters are apt to appear and then fade. But it contains four really splendid things, and some fine humour and ditto wit. There is a tirade against actors and actresses which is devastating funny and true. The translation is very good indeed.

Friday, July 17th.

I did no actual writing of my novel, and damned little thinking about it. I just lay about and read Francis Hackett's "That Once Young Couple", which after 100 pages seems to begin to have some theme to it. I went out and bought some cigars. About 4.30 went up to Hoher Salzburg. A very Margate-ish crowd; indeed the same sort of crowds everywhere. They stream into the town daily. Coming home, I met Kommer; or

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rather he stopped me and offered me a piece of paper. For a second I didn't know him. He had inquired at all the hotels for me (including this one) without success. He had then gone to the police, who informed him at once that E.A.B. was staying at the Oesterreichischer, and gave him a bit of paper to that effect; this was the paper he was exhibiting to me in the street. Kommer told us that when he was producing "The Miracle" in Cleveland (staggering success), he could never get any eatable food there. He said that when he and Diana Cooper dined at the house of the richest millionaire in Cleveland, the ices were actually bought at a store—not made in the house. He said that the modesty of Asquith's country house "The Wharfe" was one of the things that struck him most. Said it couldn't happen anywhere else. Asquith had been P.M. for eight years. He said that in any other country a man who had been P.M. for eight months would retire rich. He said he was now working on the German version of "The Great Adventure" and that Reinhardt would do it in both Berlin and Vienna. Probably some delay as there was great row between German managers and German stars. The managers had decided that no star should get more than £15 a night and the stars had struck. He said that the actor who took Ilam Carve made as much as £100 a night because he took 25 per cent. of the receipts. When I told him the plot of my "Flora", he said it was a sign of a wholesome public that such a plot, so simple, should be certain to arouse protest. He said that in Berlin, if you wanted to make a scandal in a theatre, you had to have a mother committing incest with *two* sons; one wasn't enough.

Saturday, July 18th.

Last night we went to dine with Kommer at Max Reinhardt's schloss, Leopoldskron, about ten minutes' drive from the town. It is a really huge house, with magnificent views of Alps on one side, and the Hoher Salzburg fortress on the other. So fine as to be scarcely credible. The house was built by an archbishop-prince about 1700 or 1680. Vast. Vast rooms. I mean really vast. We dined in a tiny dining-room that you could scarcely see, only it was larger than my ditto at home. The real banqueting room would have held 12 or 20 such rooms. Reinhardt's private suite—study, bedroom, bathroom, and dressing room is simply colossal,—like a dream. The dressing room

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would occupy twice the space of my drawing rooms together. The finest rooms are the chapel and the big reception room over it. I should say that each of them is 30 or 35 feet high at least. Not a single room was really finished off complete, except the big reception room.

Kommer said that Reinhardt has a mania for building and transforming. He has no use for a finished place. We saw a lovely music room, nearly finished, upon which a Salzburg artificer had been at work for ten years. Reinhardt is seldom there. In theory he is there for 4 months in the year; but in practice he is generally away from it. At the moment he is in Venice. He spends all his money on it. The profits of the Denver "Miracle" built an enormous semi-circular wall round two thirds of the estate. It is a good wall.

He is incurably lazy about everything except producing itself. Kommer said he had known him for twelve years and worked closely with him for four years, and had never received a letter from him or seen his writing. No intensity of urgency could make Reinhardt write a letter, or (it seems) even dictate one. Telegrams were his method of communication. He said R. was a very quiet, very modest, very shy man, with no knowledge except of his own subject; but *full of sense*. He never had known him to say anything foolish. Also he was never a bore.

Yesterday I wrote 1,100 words of the novel. I am still wondering whether they are good or evil.

Wednesday, July 22nd.

Great heat. No waistcoat even in the evening. Went to a performance of Leo Fall's "Madame Pompadour" at the Stadt-theater last night,—this piece was recently a failure in London, I think. Pompadour is a great part, but it is certain that Evelyn Laye couldn't play it. Last night the part was played by an age-ing actress, who would however still 'pass'. She had some good notes left, and sang with style. All the spoken parts were rotten. The comedian part was nicely played, with restraint. The chorus was the worst chorus I ever heard. The finale of the 2nd Act made you wonder how the manager had the damned cheek to present such a thing at all. Leo Fall seems to me to be the best of these Viennese operette composers. Certainly much better than Franz Lehar. It seems that all the fashionable operette composers congregate at Ischl, in the Saltz-

kammergut (and near here), and that such composition is a regular industry there.

Friday, July 24th.

To-day I finished a long chapter of "Raingo" . . . 32,000 words in all up to date. Great heat these last few days. Finally getting rid of my neuralgia. I stayed in my room till evening yesterday, and wrote in pyjamas and was still much too hot. But for me, heat favours work. I wrote 1,500 words to-day. Salzburg is now filling up more and more. And a few smartly dressed people are to be seen about and the restaurants are even fuller than before.

Saturday, July 25th.

The Austrians are a cheerful, polite people, apparently thoughtful for animals and other helpless beings. The work in the countryside seemed at this season to be chiefly carrying hay (on long horse or ox wagons) and transporting tree-trunks. Also sawed wood was stacked at roadsides waiting to be moved.

The Austrian cuisine is certainly rich. Always thick sauces. And rich cakes for sweets. Stewed fruits. Fish is mainly trout.

A fresh visitor at Frida's (in addition to Polgar, and M. and Mdme. Franck previously met) was a young man about 30, Kralich; musical critic in Vienna. Nearly as charming as Polgar, with a most attractive face. He said the Vienna opera was in a crisis, no money, no new composers; only R. Strauss, etc. He said he once liked "Louise", but did so no longer. He thought "Falstaff" was thin, the work of an old man, and that "Aida" was Verdi's greatest work. Also that "Trovatore", though crude, had skill. In all this he was well agreeing with me.

Sunday, July 26th.

At night Kommer went with us to dine at Hôtel de l'Europe near station. Biggest and most fashionable hotel in Salzburg. He said beforehand that the food was very good. It was either bad or mediocre—just an international cuisine *dépourvue de tout intérêt*. Large numbers of people. Much American accent, including that of the editor of the *N.Y. World*. Some fair

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frocks. A bad band. I had thought there was no dancing in Salzburg.

Kommer suggested that I should re-write the book of "Orpheus aux Enfers" for production by Max Reinhardt in New York. I did not refuse. He told me that the big theatrical people in New York had no interest in or knowledge of the theatre as such; but were just speculators and adventurers. Much the same in London. S., who can't even write, and puts a sign on his cheques, and Jimmy White, who while a dull musical comedy is being rehearsed in Manchester, cuts out jokes from comic papers and sends them down to be inserted to liven it up, and they are inserted. I thought a great deal about my novel yesterday, but wrote nothing.

Monday, July 27th.

It cleared up yesterday afternoon, and after I had written 1,000 words of "Raingo", I went for a walk upstream on right bank. Many people, including the ticket-taker at the theatre: great hat-raising and exchanges of politeness. At night, before dinner, Kommer took us to "Orpheus aux Enfers" at Stadt-theater. It began at 7.30. I had never seen this before. The music is delicious. So is the plot. The production was terrible, and I don't see how it could have been better in the circumstances. I calculated that the stalls, full, held about £20 only. To which Kommer retorted that the actors didn't get more than 3 million kr. a month (which is about £9 sterling)—at most. I asked: "Is it worth while doing things when they have to be done so badly?" He said: "Why, of course! For instance here; they do everything. In May last I saw even Galsworthy's 'Windows' here." He then recounted what the theatre meant to him in his native town (Czernowitz, Eastern Austria), when he was a schoolboy. He said it coloured his whole life. They did everything, very badly, and he saw everything. He said: "I couldn't *walk* to that theatre. I had to run there."

Czernowitz is a small town, but it had a municipal Academy of Music, and the director of the Academy wrote a serious opera. Nobody outside Czernowitz wanted to produce it; but Czernowitz wanted to produce it, and did. After the first performance (or the 2nd or 3rd) the Burgomaster came on the stage amid terrific applause and presented to the composer 1,000 gold ducats in the name of the town. Fancy such a thing in England! Kom-

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mer said that all these small theatres (about 400 in Germany or in Germany and Austria) are the origin of talent. Reinhardt started at Salzburg. Some actors look on a place such as Salzburg as the final goal of ambition, after having played much in inns and similar fit-up places.

Tuesday, July 28th.

Kommer came at 6.45 and we were to have gone to a rehearsal of "The Miracle", but there was to be no choir that night, he found, so we didn't go. I was determined to dine one night at the Horn Hotel with the golden sign, and we went there last night. The food was excellent and cheap and the wine excellent. We talked about the organisation of the people's pleasure. Kommer quoted Chesterton as saying that since Dickens no one in England had cared for the people's pleasure because the Tories hated the people and the Liberals hated pleasure. Kommer pointed out how in Continental cities a young man could get decent civilised pleasure for almost nothing, especially in Berlin, Paris, and also in the smaller cities such as Salzburg. But not in London. When he was young in London there was nothing. Everything closed earlier (it closes earlier now) and there are only the night clubs even now, and they are not for the poor. We have the loveliest river, and it is not organised. The restaurants and cafés are rotten, and not *accueillants*, no choice of food and the food bad, little music, and it is so difficult to get to the places—you have to change and do all sorts of things. In places like Vienna, Berlin, and Paris, all such places are easy to get to (especially in Teutonic countries) and the entire population goes out to them on Sundays.

As regards the stage Kommer said that young actors were not supposed to live on their salaries. Parents tried to stop their children from going on the stage, because of the hazardous nature of the career; but once the children were there they helped them to make a start. The profession had a good social standing. He said that German (not Austrian) actors were impossible creatures to live and work with. Outrageous. He said they had twelve German actors in the "Miracle" at New York, and they caused far more trouble than all the rest of the 350 to 400 in the company put together.

I wrote another 1,000 words of "Lord Raingo" yesterday morning.

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Friday, July 31st.

Wednesday morning, collecting ideas, I went for a walk down stream on left bank and up stream on right bank. Plenty of life going on on these banks; dogs playing in shallows; a dog being caught in current and carried down at a great pace and ultimately getting across. Boys playing in shallows. Fishermen. Old people on benches chatting and making fat poodles sit up too long. Poor women sewing and knitting. Fairly well-to-do young mothers with perambulators, and occupying a whole bench with piles of sewing work and spending a large proportion of time staring admiringly at the baby. Young girls in converse. Water cart (motor) rushing along and creating at first a prodigious dust. I got ideas for my next section; but returned home with the beginning of neuralgia. I worked in afternoon, but my neuralgia got worse and worse, and I stopped after 800 words.

Sunday, August 2nd.

On Friday I was still suffering so much from the effects of neuralgia that I could do no work. Shopped in the afternoon, and went to see a German film in the evening; it was very bad, as bad as the weather. Yesterday also I was suffering, and so I decided to go out for the day. Through Hallein to Golling, a large village full of medium hotels. Lunch at the Alte Post, whose proprietor, Steinach, told me that the hotel had been in the hands of his family for 111 years. Began lunch with the largest trout I have ever seen—caught 2 hours earlier. Golling and other villages near have a character of their own. The gables of the houses face the streets; wide eaves, sometimes a balcony under the eaves with a tiled roof of its own. Brightly painted window frames and shutters, and plenty of flowers on the sills. Plenty of visitors. At the Alte Post were four rooms fairly full of lunchers; we lunched on the terrasse. After lunch took a 2-horse carriage to see the waterfalls. The car couldn't go, because the bridge over the Salzach is forbidden to cars. About 10 minutes' drive, and then about 50 minutes to climb steps and things in order to see the 3 waterfalls, one above another. The waterfalls were fully up to descriptions thereof and really most impressive. I have never seen anything to beat this drive for grandeur of scenery. At Werfel we stopped

at 4 p.m. for coffee at an outwardly unassuming hotel and had superb coffee and cakes, very well served by a smart, slim, sparkling waitress. Within I saw the kitchen and a chef in a chef's white cap making pastry. It was strange to see this perfection in a village lost in the mountains.

On the way home, between Hallern and Salzburg we came upon a motor accident, collision; the road was unnecessarily blocked for a long time during palavers between the respective owners and drivers and the gendarme. The chief words repeated 1,000 times, were "mein lieber herr". Everybody nervously excited but very polite and restrained. After dinner Kommer came along to the hotel with Rosamund Pinchot and 2 German journalists. He introduced Rosamund. A day or two ago he had told me the astounding story of how Reinhardt had seen this society girl on the tender, going to America, and had instantly said: "Here is the girl who can play the nun" ("The Miracle"), and had ultimately engaged her, though she had had no experience whatever of the stage, nor any longing to go on the stage.

I finished "The Kellys and the O'Kellys" yesterday morning: Trollope's 2nd novel, written at the age of 34. This novel is consistently excellent, and Algar Thorold's introduction to it is absurdly trifling and inadequate. The characterisation is admirable, strong, true, and sober.

Monday, August 3rd.

Yesterday afternoon I began to read "Anna Karenina" again. And it did me much good, providing the inspiration I needed for my own work.

Tuesday, August 4th.

Bad weather again yesterday. I went out in the morning to get ideas, and got cold instead. The river raged downwards; all shingle banks had disappeared, and the torrent stretched clear from bank to bank. Umbrellas the chief sight in the town.

Wednesday, August 5th.

Another 1,000 words of "Lord Raingo" yesterday afternoon, between 5.15 and 7.15, after a bad night. Kommer joined us late at lunch in the Mirabell Garden, among the wasps. After dinner we went to the Café Corso, to hear the Hungarian musi-

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cians,—Zigeuner Kapelle. These Austrians are gayer than the English. They laugh easily and have pleasant faces and eyes, though grace is not always one of their qualities—except of manner. The men generally have a little thing like a small feather duster stuck, brush up, at the back of their hats. Pants are more and more often embroidered. I saw two country well-off lads on Sunday with a string of silver coins round their waists. The bow-neckties are rather good—bright and with nice patterns, and small. Knapsack carrying, and also by girls, is very common, and pretty heavy knapsacks too. The passers-by are now much less dowdy than a month ago, and one sees that fashion binds after all the whole female sex of Western Europe together—when the money will run to it.

Thursday, August 6th.

At night, with Kommer, to a rehearsal by Reinhardt of "The Miracle", at the Residenz. I saw a little insignificant man in the gloom which covers the floor, but not the upper spaces, of the vast room; and it was Reinhardt. For an instant he seemed *quite* insignificant. Then at once you saw he was not. He stood well on his feet, had fire and authority, and yet was always quiet and smiling. I was much impressed by him. I also liked much of the acting. This rehearsal was an experience. It lasted till 11 p.m. A dreadful night to drive about the streets in a fiacre behind a very old white horse and a very old driver.

Friday, August 7th.

This hotel is very well run. The staff seems to be very cheerful; but most people seem to be cheerful in this part of Austria, and I think that the hours of the staff are very long. So far as I can see the young boys here work at least fourteen hours a day, and they seem to be here every day—Sundays included. I see a boy-waiter working at 9.30 at night who sometimes brings me my breakfast at 8 a.m. and who probably begins work actually at 7 a.m. The chambermaid here, who is very good indeed,—well I have seen her about in the corridors at 6.35 a.m. and she is also about at 10 p.m. The other evening she went out with an elderly woman—probably her mother; a night off, nice to witness, but also rather pathetic. Yesterday lunch with Max Reinhardt at the Schloss Leopoldskron. The house looked

much more in order and 'finished' than when I was there last—except the chapel, which was still a lumber room. Reinhardt has great authority—with all his quietness and shyness. Linguistic ignorance separated us, but we got on very well indeed. Kommer says that he still has no idea of time—or rather of what is possible and not possible to do or get done in any given time. What he is doing just now (*inter alia*, rehearsing two plays at once) seems prodigious. The invitation was for 2 o'clock but Kommer said 2.30 would do. Reinhardt arrived at about 2.40; then took some of the guests for a stroll in the garden, and I should say that lunch began about 2.55. He arises at 10 when working, and goes to bed about 4. When idle he gets up for lunch.

Monday, August 10th.

I wrote 1,300 words of novel on Saturday and 2,300 words yesterday before 3.30 p.m. This constituted an enormous effort. At 10 p.m. we went on to a rehearsal of "The Miracle" at the Residenz. Reinhardt left at 10.45 to go to an 11 p.m. dinner which he was giving at Leopoldskron. Whereupon Rosamund Pinchot (the Nun) had an attack of nerves because he wasn't there to direct her, and her mother was upset. I told her it was the most ordinary thing in the world and not worth thinking about. I only had $3\frac{3}{4}$ hours sleep on Saturday night, and yet wrote 2,300 on Sunday. At 4 p.m. took the railway up to the summit of the Gaisberg. Too misty and sunshiny to see clearly, but it was all very impressive. A damn fine lump of mud, the Gaisberg, 4,200 feet. Kommer gave a 2.15 p.m. lunch, at which we met Hugo von Hoffmansthal and wife. He is a very jolly fellow, about 45 I should say, and looking younger. Three children practically grown up, I understood. Just bought his first car, of which he was most naïvely and charmingly proud. He said that of course I, being a novelist chiefly, wrote all the year round and that he, being a dramatist, *worked only in the autumn*. I was delighted with H. von H.; also with his wife. This is the third day of very hot stifling weather, with sun all the time.

Leave to-morrow, Tuesday, 11th, at 5.30, by the Orient Express. I shall have been here 33 full days, and I estimate I have written over 35,000 words despite chronic and acute neuralgia.

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Tuesday, August 11th.

Mrs. Pinchot came to dinner last night. Then we went to a concert of new composers at the "Big Hall" of the Mozarthaus. Bad for sound. Then to rehearsal of "The Miracle" in the new Fest-Spiel Theatre. It seemed absolutely impossible that the theatre should be finished for Wednesday. It seemed about half done. The organ was working. The rehearsal very rough. Kommer told me that von Hoffmansthal was about 52; had made a great name by two poems at the age of about 18-20. A rich man, but after the war without a cent.

I find on closer calculation I have written during the stay here, 11,000 words of journal, 21,500 words of novel, and two *Sunday Pictorial* articles of 1,600 words each; total 35,700 words—average over 1,000 words a day.

This morning I went to a rehearsal of von Hoffmansthal's "The Great World Theatre" in the still far-from-finished Salzburg Festtheater. I asked him when he wrote the play. He said in his funny clipped English: "I wrote it in 1920 (or 21?). There was Bolshevism in Munich and Bolshevism in Buda-Pesth. We Austrians were between the two. I said 'Shall we turn Bolshevik?' and I said 'No I think we shall not.' Partly because we have a certain natural common sense, and partly because we have been living happily for hundreds of years. So I wrote the play." The little speech was rather touching and very charming. All the acting at this rehearsal was admirable.

The Orient Express came into Salzburg punctual to the minute, and left ditto. It took us a full 45 minutes to get baggage through the Customs and to pay for registration, and get passports passed. I got one passport from an official after final inspection just as the train was leaving. A *tremendous* thunderstorm as the train passed through Bavaria. It was scarcely over when we reached Munich at 8.15.

75, Cadogan Square, Friday, September 4th.

The big new French clock was on the floor in the box-room. She said: "I put it away there because it stuck out on the mantelpiece, and all the curves of the ornament, leaves and twigs and things, seemed to be the same as the curves of my nausea. So I put it away till the nausea has gone."

She saw two nice-looking little boys in the restaurant at

Harvey Nichols, and kept on referring to the extraordinary niceness of the face of one of them. At last she said: "I should like my boy to have a face like that." The secret was out.

Thursday, September 10th.

Talking about keeping calm in a crisis, Roch said yesterday at the Reform that when he was interested in racing and an amateur jockey, etc., and got worried over a horse getting off its feed, etc., an old stableman or trainer or somebody said to him: "Now don't get excited. And have one or two good *spits* before you begin to do anything."

Friday, September 11th.

She said: "I've never enjoyed things so much. The sky. The wind. He is a happy creature (note 'he is' not 'he will be'—less than two months gone). This does not mean that I'm happy. But he is. Also he is adventurous. I have a much stronger feeling of the adventure of life than ever I had before. (But she always had it.) When I take a taxi, I'm apt to think of the danger in the traffic, to him and to me. But when I think it over I say: 'This is life. This is adventure. . . . Of course if it's a girl I shall have to adjust my ideas, but she'll be the same, really. I don't think the name 'Delphine' will suit her.'" (My random suggestion.)

Sunday, September 13th.

A great fertile spurt of writing lately. Finishing to-day. I wrote two short stories: "One of these Quarrels" and "The Cornet Player" (for the *Strand Magazine*—10,000 words in all) in nine days. I found the plot of the second one the morning after I finished the first one, and began to write it the same afternoon.

D. said, while we were eating fried roes on toast at dinner last night: "We're eating 'young'!"

Tuesday, September 15th.

Talked to W. J. Lock last night at the Garrick. He said he had practically a life contract with Hearsts for serials, going on till 1932. I said if I offered a story for a serial they always wanted it altered. He said with him, never. Once he had his hero try to commit suicide. Hearsts said that they had a strong

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Baptist connection, and that readers might object to the hero having a tendency to suicide, and would Locke turn it into an accident (motor car, it was). He did so. On another occasion they wanted the end of a story altering. He said: "If you can get one of the clever young men in your office to alter it I shall have no objection." This certainly was a masterpiece of a reply, and made Duff Tayler and me roar. Of course Hearsts left the thing alone. On another occasion they wanted a tale altering. He replied by cable: "Wife won't let me." He said he worked between 10 p.m. and 2 a.m. and never at any other time. His first story (a short story £2 10. 0.) appeared in *London Society* in 1882, in the same number as an instalment of Wilkie Collins's "I say No". This is what they call a "link".

Monday, September 28th.

D. said: "I've taken him to a concert and a picture gallery, and a Charlie Chaplin film." D. Massingham replied: "He won't want any educating by the time he's born."

Tuesday, October 6th.

Yesterday, the funniest sequel to the great publicity I had over my scrap with the Bishops in the *Daily Express*. Someone starting a new *advertising agency* where the advertising was to be "strictly scientific", wrote offering me the post of "head" of it—managing director. I had no capital to find and was to have a high remuneration from the start. I was so tickled and touched by this that I told nearly everyone, and I recounted it in 3 personal letters yesterday morning.

Wednesday, October 14th.

D. having been much disturbed by revelations of character during a visit to Brighton with me on Monday, could not go to sleep. She told me that her infant had been subjected for the first time to evil influence and was unhappy and uncomfortable; also that he turned over about 1 a.m. However this experience somehow made her see the relations of good and evil, and how good could creep in when evil had been cast out, etc. Although the whole experience was perhaps an illusion, it was so real to her that it excited her very much, and her account of it was very interesting,—especially with all the detail which she always gives.

JOURNAL OF ARNOLD BENNETT

Friday, October 16th.

This morning I made my will leaving everything to Dorothy except what I have earmarked to give to Marguerite.

Wednesday, November 11th.

I finished Part I (including all the political stuff) of "Lord Raingo" on Monday afternoon, to my great relief. While doing this I could not be bothered to write journals or do anything that I was not absolutely compelled to do. 83,000 words of the novel are now done. Beaverbrook has read all but the last 4 (short) chapters, to vet. it for political correctness, and he is enthusiastic about it, thrilled by it. He only found one small slip in it (about the time at which it would be possible for Raingo to leave the House of Commons after hearing a debate). He found another slip; but it wasn't one. He made two suggestions, one for altering the wording of a telegram, and the other in a form of address. It is *marvellous* to me that I have been able to do all these complicated politics without once getting off the rails. I can scarcely believe it.

Beaverbrook said he would guarantee the rightness of the politics. He said it was the finest thing he had read for years. Miss Nerney also describes it as "a very fine book". So I am rather reassured. I shall leave it now for ten days while I write an article and work up the libretto of the "Bandits" which Phillpotts and I are doing for music by Austin.

Yesterday I corrected the typescript of a short story "The Cornet Player" which I think is the most original story I have ever written.

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Hotel de Russie, Rome, Friday, January 1st.

Three Madonna churches in Piazza del Popolo. I went into two this morning at 11 a.m. At S. Maria del Popolo, fine church with two good chapels, lovely design, and some good baroque, mammoth music and choir. Quite a congregation. All the high altar lit up by electricity like a booth at a wakes. At S. Maria del Monte Santo, two altars were being served at once. More gorgeous priests. Congregation spread over the floor on chairs, anyhow, as at a drawing-room meeting. Collection being made by a dwarf in a short white thing over black; dirty face; very dark.

Later I went into the same church (S. M. del Popolo) again with D. Another Mass afoot, but the electric illuminations of the high altar had been extinguished. Why? A larger congregation. We made out the paintings by Pinturicchio, Raphael, etc., and sculpture by Mino da Fiesole. This church ought to be seen again and again. It shall be. We drove up to the top of the Janiculum Hill, for the view of Rome at sunset. It was marvellous, rose-tinted; then the sun disappeared, and the show was suddenly over. Crowds of people up there. Crowds everywhere, for New Year's Day holiday. Then we came home from Janiculum and I wrote 1,000 words of "Raingo" in 90 minutes.

One of the chief curses of Roman street life is the hooting of the motors. Incessant and peculiarly strident. If it isn't altered the population will develop some nervous disease.

Saturday, January 2nd.

1,070 words of "Raingo" this morning 9-11 o'clock. At 11.45 we went for a walk. Called at American Express Co. Grumbling American woman, repeating grumbles, about not being served quickly at the tellers' desk. If things don't go smoothly Ameri-

can women usually frown and change their sweet tone for a sour.

I finished Baring's "Cat's Cradle" at 5.45 p.m. 720 big pages. Its curious fault is that it reads as if it really had happened: a report of actual events. It has taken me 14 days, about, to read.

Going out to dinner, passing a barber's shop. Vision of the barber standing quite away from the half-shaved customer and flourishing his razor in argument.

Friday, January 8th.

After siesta we went for a drive up the Janiculum Hill, and saw Rome. On the way up the driver stopped suddenly and despite protests got out. He said in Italian, pointing, "House of Torquato Tasso, author of 'Jerusalem Delivered'." He enjoyed the sun, meditated, and then wrote." I thought this wonderful; it was so naïve and so direct, with a smile. Then we descended to the Tiber, and saw the outlet of the Cloaca Maxima, and the Temple of Vesta and Fortune, and home along the left bank of the Tiber. I then wrote 1,200 words (good) of "Raingo" in 2½ hours. Dined at hotel.

Monday, January 11th.

The Queen Margherita funeral took place this morning. The maître d'hôtel had seen it and he described it to us. The electric street lamps on the route were draped in crêpe and lighted. A good scheme, that London would never have thought of. The walls of the streets have been covered with large black appeals to members of various societies to honour the mourning for the Queen. This afternoon, crowds in the streets. Shop-shutters lowered, but the majority of the shops open—with a gloomy, holiday air. But no sign of gloom in the demeanour of the thousands of saunterers.

Tuesday, January 12th.

I began to revise recently written bits of "Raingo" at 7 a.m. We went to the Doria Gallery this morning. Badly hung pictures. Badly lighted. The galleries narrow and terribly over decorated. The collectors seemed to have had a sure taste for the second rate. But there were several very fine Breughels—small, second rate Claudes and Titians, and a lot of filthy stuff.

The Velasquez pretty good.

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¹ The Velas

JANUARY 8-JANUARY 19, 1926

The Velasquez portrait of the Pope,¹ 'hung in lone splendour', pretty good.

Home at 4.10, had tea, and had written 1,000 words of "Rain-go" before 6.30—although I was rather depressed about the general 'feel' of the end of the book. I fear people (discerning persons) may ask: "What is the book *about*?" and I mayn't be able to answer them. I don't know, articulately, what the 'idea' of the book is.

Thursday, January 14th.

Neuralgia all night. I finished Gerhardt's "The Polyglots" in the night. This work is too long, lacks shape, and has a few short passages of merely silly jocosity, but as a whole it is individual, original, comical, touching, and full of flavour. In the night I also read a lot of "Candide". The most amusing novel ever written.

Sunday, January 17th.

A holiday. We did the Forum for an hour and a half before lunch, and as usual I saw lots of fine water-colour subjects. The marble of the portico pillars of the temple to Antoninus and Faustina, in the midst of which temple the Papacy had the damned cheek to build a church. But what a water-colour! We only tackled one small corner of the Forum, and only tackled the surface of that. The interest is prodigious.

There may be a lot of gambling (lotteries) in Rome, but there must be little on racing or games, and not a trace of that newspaper service of gambling which is one of the most striking things in London streets.

Tuesday, January 19th.

Began my day's work at 6.45 after a goodish night starting at 11.45. I wrote 1,300 words, and finished a scene by 11.30 about.

Lunch at the hotel. Tea at Frank Schuster's apartment in the Palazzo Cini. Afterwards he and we went to a concert in a drawing-room in a palazzo in the Piazza Paganica. We got there at the stated hour 5.30 precisely, and the concert had begun. It was to boom Mark Raphael, a young East End Jew, with a nice voice and no distinction. The concert party

¹ The Velasquez painting of Innocent X is in a cabinet by itself.

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consisted of Raphael, Roger Quilter, and Maude Valerie White. The last accompanied several of her own songs sung by Raphael. She is a very old woman, but plays with immense *brio* and decision. Her eye flashed, and she sometimes said or sang the words to herself, with her witch-like fallen-in mouth closed. Also she would look full at the singer sometimes, as if to admire or to inspire him. She became extraordinary young, fiery, and humorous while playing, and made a fine sight. Quilter seemed quite a *sympathique* person. The only good items in the programme were a Galuppi, a Salvator Rosa, and two songs by Schubert and two by Schumann.

Friday, January 22nd.

I re-read "Candide", and was rather disappointed in it. Even on its own plane it is very far-fetched. No construction, and not much material coherence. The hero is a perfect fool, an incredible fool, throughout. The same may be said of Zadig, which also I am now reading. Zadig is an idiot. But both tales 'read themselves', and are studded with great larks. Everywhere the misfortunes of the virtuous are grossly overdone.

Saturday, January 23rd.

I didn't begin to work till 6 p.m. Lunch at the hotel. Then we went for a drive. Right down right bank of Tiber to the place where I moored the *Velsa* before the war. Much interested to see this again. It was a good spot. Then we drove around seeing Jewry, including the Marcello Theatre, with little shops in its ground-floor arches, odd dwellings above, and apparently large flats in the superimposed modern part—by modern I mean 30 or 40 years old. Then to varied odd remains, and we came to an enclosed place where 'excavation' was actually in process of being done. This was thrilling.

Since the 1st Jan. the street, traffic-controlling police, newly initiated by Mussolini, have been very proud of their new uniforms and mackintoshes. In the Corso the horn-hooting seems to be less. But I must inspect this after my novel is done.

Tuesday, January 26th.

I finished "Lord Raingo" at 5.30 p.m. to-day, having written 2,000 words in the day. Total length: 130,200 words. I liked the last chapter. Very tired.

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JANUARY 22-JANUARY 30, 1926

Friday, January 29th.

I read in the first number of the *New Criterion*, in which are some weird things, including one by Gertrude Stein, out of which I could make nothing; and not much out of T. S. Eliot's essay on what a review ought to be. Aldous Huxley's story "The Monocle" was good in detail, but had absolutely no plot, and is really only a sketch. Perhaps he meant it for a sketch; only I think he meant it for a short story and failed to bring it off.

Saturday, January 30th.

Better night. Six hours in all. I did my exercises at 2 a.m. Then went back to bed and woke up at 5.45. What relief! It was good sleep. Then woke up again. It was 6.40. What relief! I saw the whole world differently.

We went with Martin Wilson to St. Peter's. I was determined to go up to the roof, if not to the cupola. It was very easy to go to the roof—by the lift: which we did. 5 lire apiece. Size of the Cyclopean statues in the top of the façade. Ugliness of them also. Plenty of room to walk about, though much space is roped off. There are dwellings on the roof, and one post-card, etc., shop. Fine views of Rome, campagna, hills, sea-lined. Much of the leadwork very finely finished. But the roof of the nave seems to be tiled. Views of the Vatican and its gardens, etc. Then to the cupola. As far as the Whispering Gallery it is quite easy. Excellent stone steps. The view of the interior of the church from this gallery is very fine and restful. Human dots on the floor crawling about. Letters 6 ft. high. Altar as high as Farnese Palace. Dome as big as Pantheon. Cupola 55 ft. high, as high as a hotel. Ball holds 16 people. But the queerest thing about deceptive size is that the *panes* of the glass windows at back, which seem about 8 ft. high in all must be each 4 or 5 ft. high and there are at least eight of them one above another. A little world of *guardiani* at the various stages; all very polite. The next stage, to the west gallery (top of the 'drum' before the 'spring' of the dome begins) is also easy. Floor of church still farther away of course. Beauty and fineness of all the mosaic work, with which the dome and drum are entirely covered; the labour of it. I learnt that all the pictures (Raphael, Domenichino, etc.) in the church are

JOURNAL OF ARNOLD BENNETT

mosaic. Only two oil pictures (small) in all church. Climb to cupola fairly easy; but through much of it you have to walk, bent sideways. View from Cupola. The whole business is very impressive indeed. The church is a lovely thing.

Sunday, January 31st.

Yesterday I bought a set of tortoiseshell brushes and things for D. We spent a lot of the morning in the Villa Borghese which was surprisingly full of fine and half-fine things. The celebrated Titian "Sacred and Profane Love" improved as one looked at it. Fine Correggio, and Cranach, Raphael, etc. etc. And curious, interesting minor things. Also fine sculpture, including Houdin's "John the Baptist", in glass. Marvellous. Also "The most richly decorated room in Rome". Perhaps it was.

Wednesday, February 3rd.

After tea I went into S. Maria of the Miracles in the P. del Popolo, because it was open, and I was too feeble to walk. All at once in a different world (with the lounge of the Russie just across the street). Church scarcely lit. A few people, chiefly old and poor. A choir boy or acolyte moves about, bowing to altar every time he passes in front of it, lighting a bit of electric light. Then a bigger acolyte, a tall man, appears, and climbs up and does things to the altar. People come in, like the others chiefly old and poor and mainly women, but a few aged men. The priest comes with hands together, and kneels at altar, and begins to chant and the congregation gives the responses. I should say quite twenty minutes this goes on. It is wonderful how the congregation remembers the responses. Meanwhile the boy, having left bell-ringing to priest, begins to light tall altar candles by a light on the end of a long stick. He has difficulty with some of them. Somebody hidden behind the altar helps with a still longer stick—uncanny effect of this longer stick moving about without hands. At last all lighted. An older priest, only in black—no ornaments, has come and sat at a desk within the choir. Church now lit. Very effective. Then an organ (?American) in a gallery strikes up. It is awful. Also a small hidden choir, equally awful. A tremendously long and monotonous choral business. I left before it was over. I had been in the church 50 minutes at least.

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JANUARY 31-FEBRUARY 6, 1926

Thursday, February 4th.

Night moderately bad. Finished "Fathers and Sons" article for *Sunday Pictorial* at 6 p.m. At 11.20, D. and Martin Wilson and I went to Palatine Hill, and saw (chiefly) the views therefrom—and especially the dome of St. Peter's, like a pearl (really, in the soft light). It was a wonderful humid day for colour, and of course it rained before we reached Ranieri's for lunch. Livia's house. Tiberius's palace, etc. It seems that in the garden on the top, the State grows all the old Roman plants. I began to get tired *immediately* I began to walk about seeing sights. After lunch I ached in every limb, and I still ache, and I have neuralgia. It is always the same. Before returning to the hotel for siesta we called at a jeweller's to buy a Roman pearl for me. It was 2 o'clock. Only two girls in charge (doubtless relatives of proprietor). Neither of them knew anything of the business. Dined at the new Plaza Hotel, with the Sullivans and Elena's young sister Rachel as guests. Food good, and not dear. I've seldom seen anything to surpass the decorations of this hotel for intricate and sustained vulgarity.

Friday, February 5th.

I spent a lot of the morning at the top of the hotel garden, which I had never discovered before, after having been here over seven weeks. Marvellous view over Rome, of which I made a sketch. I thought about my new novel,¹ had quite a lot of excellent ideas concerning it. After siesta we took a taxi and drove along dusty and dull and very bad roads to Tre Fontane—the place where Paul's head jumped three times after being cut off, at each place producing a fountain. There are three churches, and if they locate the fountains, Paul's head must have very considerably bounded. Two churches were open, both very poor and odd and neglected. In fact—no interest at all—yet it is a place one is supposed to go to!

Saturday, February 6th.

I did a little bit of reflection on my new novel in the church of S. Maria del Popolo. Then at 11.40 we drove to the Lateran museum, and saw the sculpture. The mosaic 'unswept floor of a dining-room' is very amusing, and throws a light on Roman

¹ "The Vanguard."

table-manners, etc. "Sophocles" equal to its reputation.—Nothing else that *really* remained in the memory, though there are lots of very fine things. We found no pictures at all. Some damaged frescoes. The Christian museum we wouldn't look at. Somehow Rome makes one notably anti-Christian. What chiefly struck me was the desire of the *custodiani* for human society. Of course one may say that all they are after is a tip. But long after he perceived clearly that I had no tip for him, one of them followed me about. I have noticed the same thing at Naples museums. I finished Mrs. Mellin's "God's Step-children". It is decidedly a good book. We dined with the Sullivans at the Grand Hotel. The atmosphere of the Grand Hotel is as if it is always Sunday there. At another table there was a solitary old woman, fat and ugly and distinguished. I cried aloud at the sight of her entrance—she was so queer, and so impressive. Afterwards in the lounge she had five men, not all old, in tow. She dominated them, talked like a man and laughed loudly also like a man. We learned she was from Naples, and an author. I didn't catch the name clearly. Anyhow I had never heard it before. Not often do you see such an impressive personality.

I returned to reading Tchekoff's letters to his wife Olga. They are good, if monotonous. Olga is always setting herself right in footnotes against his false accusations against her of negligence in the matter of writing to him. She is right to do so, but it is funny.

Sunday, February 7th.

As I passed across the end of the hotel lounge to-night the noise of the American accent everywhere was simply awful. The American tourists will overrun Europe like the Goths soon. It is positively frightening.

Monday, February 8th.

After waking about once an hour from midnight to 5 p.m. I arose at 6 and wrote the first scene of a new sensational, comical, moralistic larkish novel, and have been completely exhausted during the rest of the day.

I have gone back to reading Stendhal on Rome. A relief. This book is always interesting.

Sunday, February 7th.

A lovely day. Appia Antica wanted to go on such a day. The skies are blue.

D. wanted to go. I was keen pleased to see him last time. About twenty people.

Hotel Netuno.

I find that I have spent lire, and it is worth nearly nothing.

We left Rome for Paris, and it was a marvellous journey, in every way and sense. The plumbing was perfect, water in each room (a lot), but the food was perfect. Had to be used at the restaurant. At the restaurant constructed somehow in the middle of the city.

Pisa, Tuesday.

At 8.30 a.m. I went to see me at the station at 11.30. I was rather nervous, only twelve years old. I wanted to go. I had always been in Heine's "Rome". I had gone on a journey after an earthquake. At Lucca I was walking past the cathedral.

FEBRUARY 7—FEBRUARY 16, 1926

Sunday, February 14th.

A lovely day and D. *would* go out for a drive along the Via Appia Antica. I told her it would tire and upset her, but she wanted to go, and the advantages of seeing the Campagna on such a day were obvious. The views were marvellous, especially the skies and the other distances.

D. wanted to see it for 'the last time'. Lots of people take a keen pleasure in the supposed sadness of seeing a thing for the last time. D. repeated the phrase again and again, probably about twenty times during the afternoon.

Hotel Nettuno, Pisa, Monday, February 15th.

I find that this year I have written more words than I have spent lire, and as a lire is worth 2d. and my words ought to be worth nearly 2s. each, I should be all right on balance.

We left Rome easily and comfortably for the 11.55 *lusso* to Paris, and got off the train at Pisa punctually at 5.25. A marvellous, cloudless, sunshiny day, with ditto scenery the whole way and smooth travelling. Descended at the Nettuno at Pisa. The plumbing in these Italian hotels is barbaric. Hot and cold water in each room and private bathroom (140 lire per day the lot), but the water running away out of the basins makes a perfect hades of a row—so much so that the basins couldn't be used at night without waking the person in the next room. At the Russie the taps and curves of basins and baths were so constructed that the water if turned on full, always splashed somehow into the room. Single doors between rooms!

Pisa, Tuesday, February 16th.

At 8.30 a.m. I received a note from C. K. Scott Moncrieff asking to see me and offering to show me things in the town. He came at 11.30. Lame, quick, fussy. Very talkative (smartishly) and rather nervous at first but not later. He said that Lucca was only twelve miles off. This was on our way to the cathedral. I wanted to turn back at once and get a car for Lucca, which had always been romantic to me on account of a chapter in Heine's "Reisebilder". We couldn't get a car in the town. All had gone or were going to Viareggio for the Carnival. However, after an early lunch we did get a car.

At Lucca we got a *carrozza*, and went through the town at walking pace, and saw cathedrals and churches. Very fine and

distinctive, and Moncrieff a good guide. A rich town, prosperous, clean, self-contained and self-sufficient. More so than Pisa. The oil business and farming must be money-making. But I asked for the Bagni di Lucca, made fascinating to me by Heine—and they were twenty miles off. So I was baulked there. At San Frediano, Lucca, it was interesting to see the altar where Francia's "Entombment" once was. Who pinched it and put it in the National Gallery I don't know.

Hotel Miramar, Genoa, Wednesday, February 17th.

Pisa. Duomo in morning. As Ash Wednesday, service going on. Large audience of choir boys and *écobiers* and a few schoolgirls and old people. Many guests of various ranks. The parson began to preach, got up full speed in about twenty seconds, and then never paused or even hesitated for a word for half an hour. Then he sat down and wiped his face, and then, still sitting, talked to the congregation about a collection. When you were close by he was perfectly audible. Twenty yards off you distinctly heard two voices, and still farther off you heard three or four voices, a babel of voices, all furiously arguing or wrangling. It was a most curious echo effect.

Arrived at Genoa at 6, on time, soon after a stormy sunset. Hotel there far fuller than we had ever seen it before. I finished Macaulay on the "Wars of the Spanish Succession", and began "Pilgrim's Progress", which promises well.

Genoa, Thursday, February 18th.

We didn't go out at all until 3.30 p.m., but I had done a lot of thinking about my new novel. I think I shall call it "The Vanguard". We drove along the sea front, and then back into the town by the Via XX Settembre. By this time I was dying to write Chapter III, so I continued to drive home while D. walked. I began to write at 5 p.m. and at 7.30 had written the chapter—1,200 words. All my chapters are going to be short in future.

I am not very keen on "The Pilgrim's Progress". So far it is too full of minute "similitudes", which are tedious. I doubt whether I shall finish. The question is: Do children read it all? Or do they skip the morality and theology for the more active parts? I doubt whether the book is holding its own in the public esteem to-day.

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FEBRUARY 17—FEBRUARY 22, 1926

Hôtel Winter Palace, Menton, Friday, February 19th.

I wrote 700 words of the novel ("Vanguard") before leaving Genoa for Menton. A beautiful day, hot. We left by the Pullman at 11.58 and arrived at Menton promptly just after 3 (French time), despite Customs and passports. Train stuffy on account of an oldish gentleman who had just recovered from influenza and was justifiably afraid of draughts. The atmosphere of the Winter Palace is mainly English. The dinner scene in the large restaurant was markedly English. I haven't yet heard an American accent; which is very odd after Rome.

Sunday, February 21st.

An overcast day. As D. wanted to rush off instantly to Monte Carlo, I hired a car (only 150 fr.) and at 11.50 we did rush off. Lunched at Hotel de Paris, as being the best place (180 fr. with tip). The only person I knew there was T. P. O'Connor, looking very definitely old. Then across the road to the Casino Theatre: "Boris Godounoff". I had forgotten what this *salle* looked like. Built by Farmer about 1878. The richest, ornatest, gildedest thing in Europe I should think. Full of nudities and semi-nudities, in colours, gold or white. Two of the boxes, very large, look directly away from the stage into the auditorium. The sloping ground floor is well arranged, and 900 people can see very excellently. We were in the back row (87 fr. for 2 seats—not dear). A mediocre but not entirely odious performance. This opera wears very well.

There were some decent people—a few—at lunch at the Hotel de Paris; but on the faces of most, the consciousness of being correctly at the Hotel de Paris. We got back to the more agreeable Kensingtonianism of the Winter Palace, Menton, at 6.15, and I went to bed for an hour. We dined late, and the big restaurant was nearly empty.

I finished Macaulay on "Pitt". He is always very instructive, and he has caused me to desert Stendhal, Bunyan, Tchekoff, etc. I expect I shall stick to him till I have finished the volume.

Monday, February 22nd.

I wrote 2,200 words during the day. I still think that this novel may be called "The Vanguard".

Fearfully noisy band to tea in the afternoon, and a terrific

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racket of conversation in the lounges after dinner but happily music in the evening only twice a week. The amount of Puccini played in Italy appals the conception. It is dreadfully vulgar stuff. "Tosca", "Bohème", "Butterfly", "Tosca", "Bohème", "Butterfly". Luscious, obvious, easily-graspable stuff, all commonplace, with bits of something at rare intervals that is not so bad as the rest.

I read Huxley's Indian diary in the American *Bookman*. Admirably done, but very short. A good example of honesty making the *best* use of trifles. I suppose that Aldous will waste nothing of these Indian experiences. He will use up every bit of it. He certainly throws one or two new lights on India.

My "Things that have interested me" (3rd series) was published on or about the 15th. The reviews I have had so far are quite favourable, some of them very favourable. But the critics are all wrong. They say that this is the best of the three volumes. I think it is the worst.

Tuesday, February 23rd.

Beaverbrook arrived, with Morris Woods, from Nice. Max talked with us for about an hour, and then Max dashed off again, to Cannes, to meet his mother and Gladys. He said his heart gave an extra beat now and then; but he wouldn't have a big (or a little) doctor for the disease. He had bought James Mackenzie's book on the subject,¹ and stood by that. He said that he was a sure mark for any big and strong-willed doctor, and feared to enter on the career of an invalid. I suggested that he should visit a doctor anonymously; he agreed that that might do. He was playing golf daily. Freddie Lonsdale was with him. Max was going on an Eastern Mediterranean tour in the *Mauritania* on Saturday night, from Villefranche. He had taken five cabins and hadn't yet invited any of his guests. He meant to invite them to-night.

Saturday, February 27th.

Reflected in garden for forty minutes after I was dressed. I sat in the sun without moving and yet perspired. This was before 11.30. At noon we started to drive over to La Turbie to lunch with Max and Gladys B. Magnificent drive along the Grande Corniche. The party consisted of the two B.'s, William Gerhardt,

¹ "Diseases of the Heart", by Sir James Mackenzie.

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and a fellow named Mayhew (with a most singular overcoat)—staff of *Chicago Tribune*. A good luncheon party in strong sunshine, with a tang in the air. Max restless, Gladys delightful, Gerhardi in better form than usual. Gerhardi had met Rothermere last night at dinner for the first time. Asked by Max what he thought of him, Gerhardi sides-splittingly replied: "I think he has a sweet nature." Max roared himself red in the face. Max asked me how much I would take for film rights of "The Pretty Lady". I said I had got £2,000 for "Sacred and Profane Love". He said he would pay this if he produced the film.

Monday, March 1st.

I wrote 700 words in morning, and 700 in the afternoon, of novel. D. worked on her scenario of my short story "Death, Fire, and Life", and so was not ready to go out till 12.22. We sat in garden of hotel for a bit, and began to lunch fairly early. After snooze we went out at 3, and walked down to the level ground, about six minutes, and then D. did not want to walk any more, and we took a victoria and went about the town shopping.

Saturday, March 6th.

I have returned to reading Stendhal's "Promenades dans Rome". Then I sat in garden, and thought out next chapter of my novel. We just got back to the hotel at 1 p.m. for lunch. Neuralgia. I slept fifteen minutes, and woke acutely nervous and still neuralgic. I went into D. and said: "I can't sleep, and I can't work either." She said: "Perhaps you can begin packing my valise." She was sewing. I made no reply, but returned to my room and began to write. I wrote 1,100 words—a complete chapter—in seventy-five minutes, and then felt better.

Hôtel de Noailles, Marseilles, Monday, March 8th.

I walked by myself to the Vieux Port; returned and took D. to the same and we walked around. Lunched at Rest. Bristol (under Hotel ditto). Admirable restaurant. Superb bouillabaisse. Then at 4.30 to film "Knocke". This film, despite serious faults and *longueurs*, was decidedly interesting. Came out into darkness at 6.40. The Rues Cannebière and Noailles (one street) broad with broad footpaths full of jostling crowds and traffic. For movement and bigness and life it had

nothing to learn from the Grand Boulevard. In fact a great scene like a capital.

Dominion Hôtel, Avignon, Wednesday, March 10th.

To-day for the first time I knew what the *mistral* can be. It blew strongly, a harsh, cold-warm, dry wind that dries you up and discomforts the skin. Also the town is full of dust. I thought of a longish article on hotels this morning, and I wrote 1,000 words of it before dinner, upset though I was by the *mistral*. I think it must be the *mistral* which unfavourably affects the temper and manner of employees here. The *mistral* is *agaçant*.

We drove in clouds of dust to the Cathedral. Closed, but the post-card seller took us by a side door. It is a very remarkable piece of architecture, and not much like anything else. Then we saw the 'point of view'. Fine. It disclosed the strange interest of all the district around about. A district for centuries 'not France'. 'France lies over there.'

After lunch and siesta I went alone to the Palace des Papes. There are four visits a day, the last at 3.30. The Palais has little or no aesthetic interest. Its interest is archaeological and social. Only one open staircase. All the many others, together with endless narrow corridors, are cut in the thick walls (8 or 10 ft. thick), as it were secretly. And everywhere are little holes, through which everyone could be spied on by somebody else. An impression unpleasant, mean, and particularly mediæval.

Hôtel Bristol, Paris, Wednesday, March 17th.

We drove to André Maurois's house at Neuilly. Nice ground-floor flat with garden and two children (boys 4 and 5); the daughter aged 12 had gone to her *cours*. Portrait of the dead mother on table in drawing-room. She was beautiful. Something tragic about this. Maurois, slim, slight, Jewish; charming; with an open mind; interested, admirably urbane. Agreeable talking. It was all very nice. We left at 3.50, and Maurois drove us to the Faubourg St. Honoré in his car. I dozed. At 6.30 I went out to sample the Champs Elysées in the half light, and began to like Paris again. Dined at the hotel. Good. Then to Théâtre Femina. Crowded. Heated. People came in half an hour late, noisily. Play began 17 minutes late. Ended 11.45. The first act terribly Bernsteinish and old-

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¹ Walter Sic

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fashioned. Nothing to it. But in 2nd act, when it appears that Irene's *frison* is a Lesbian attachment, things begin to look up a bit. But the play was always wooden and antique in treatment; especially in dialogue. It was admirably acted by three women. M^{me}. Sylvie as the heroine, Irene, was very fine indeed. I had sandwiches at the hotel. Muriel Foster came along, and talked a bit. Alfred Sutro and wife had come along at dinner time.

Thursday, March 18th.

To Théâtre de l'Atelier (Dullin's theatre and formerly the Théâtre Montmartre). We arrived after the curtain had gone up on "Il faut qu'une porte soit ouverte ou fermée". Not a bad little trifle, but it is wonderful how this trifle does survive. It was badly played. Then Marcel Achard's new play "Je ne vous aime pas". We expected much from this and were disappointed. Nothing to it. No idea behind it. Just larking about. The first scene was good. We stuck out two acts (out of 3) and then came home. Alfred Sutro came in with Mrs. Arthur Symons. Mrs. Symons astounded me by her certainty that Walter Sickert was over seventy years of age,¹ and the same age as George Moore. He doesn't look it.

I have now read most of the juice in Becque's "Souvenirs". Fine things in it. But it isn't really souvenirs. It's a collection of articles. Becque seemed to be interested in all aspects of the theatre—the economic quite as much as the artistic. He has fine plain style for plain articles. There ought to be a full life of the fellow.

Sunday, March 21st.

Left Paris by the noon train. Very full. Three *voitures supplémentaires*. At Calais it was blowing very hard, and the sea was covered with white. Of course we decided not to go on.

Hôtel Metropole, Calais, Monday, March 22nd.

We walked after breakfast to the Gare Maritime and gradually came to the conclusion that it would be impossible safely to cross to-day. So, for a change, we engaged rooms at the Hôtel Terminus, which is very Victorian. Good rooms; no w.p. baskets. Then we walked all the way back to the Metropole, quite a

¹ Walter Sickert was, in 1926, 66 years of age. George Moore was 73.

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mile over rough surfaces—2 miles in all, and lunched and paid the bill and finished packing and got to the Terminus Hotel at 2.10 p.m. in time to see the steamer come in. No one seemed very ill or distressed. Sleep; much needed. Tea. I wrote a little sketch of "La Prisonnière" at the Théâtre Fémina. We had tea in the station buffet, and ordered our dinner there. Before dinner we strolled on the long platforms to see the evening boat come in. It was twelve minutes late. Terribly cold, windy, and the wind full of coal dust from train engines. Saw the boat, and the people go through the customs, and into the trains for Paris, Rhineland, and Warsaw. Goodish dinner in the buffet. Went to bed early in the Victorian hotel, which demanded that an article should be written on it. I might write the article.

Terminus Hotel, Calais, Tuesday, March 23rd.

Another very windy day. I walked out to the sea, and the weather was very bad. I walked quite $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles in high wind and I felt exhausted. But after a rest in a damnable uneasy chair, I began to work in the bedroom and wrote 1,400 words of a sketch of Calais in about an hour and a half. Then I went out and saw steamer arrive and three big trains depart. All the trains—Hazebrouck, Brussels and Warsaw; Wiesbaden; and Paris—were late, and all very sparsely occupied. Station full of black smoke. The bookstall girl shutting up her shop, bending down, her skirts moving in the wind. But the wind was steadily decreasing and it was less cold.

Claridge's Hotel, London, Friday, March 26th.

London shops have a display far inferior to Paris shops. No style in setting out goods. There is simply no comparison between London and Paris in this respect. An article ought to be written about it, but no paper publishing drapers' advertisements would publish such an article.

Sunday, March 28th.

I wrote 1,400 words of "The Vanguard". Or rather I re-wrote them. Still it was a good morning's work. Lunch at hotel. A man's face at the next table puzzled me through lunch; it was Esher's.

After tea we went to the film "The Sea Beast" at the New

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Gallery; the idea being taken and slaughtered from "Moby Dick". A filthy and preposterous thing and humiliating to watch. John Barrymore the chief interpreter. A dreadful Hollywood girl as the heroine; obviously chosen for her looks, which were dreadful. This film really did annoy me. We didn't see it all. The immense hall was by no means full; especially the dearest seats were nearly empty when the Barrymore film started (it was a continuous performance). The films of the Boat Race and the Grand National were not bad. The Grand National seemed to be all falls. It seemed most brutal, and I was minded to write an article about it. Also about the Boat Race, which ruins the hearts of so many youths. No. 5 in the Oxford crew this year collapsed before the end, and I expect that his heart will never be the same again. Of course he is branded, with pity, in the papers. He even has headlines. He must have had quite an agreeable week-end.

Thursday, April 1st.

I went out to buy an opera hat, and some flowers for D. Then I worked for an hour and a quarter. We dined at 7.15 in order to go to "A Cuckoo in the Nest" (with Ralph Lynn therein) at Aldwych Theatre. The plot is utterly conventional, and so are most of the jokes. What makes the play worth seeing is the clowning of Ralph Lynn, trying to sleep under the washstand in the bedroom of a lady not his wife. This is very fine indeed; it is a sort of genius; but then I always liked Ralph Lynn. The acting of Yvonne Arnaud is very excellent. She makes a living person out of the dead lines of Ben Travers. Same for Tom Walls (one of the owners of the enterprise); he gave a most finished performance.

Friday, April 2nd.

To Good Friday "Parsifal" concert at Queen's Hall. Moderate audience, but both circles very full. Moderately bad listless performance. My view of "Parsifal" was confirmed. It has good bits in it. It is spoiled by a silly magical elaboration of a good story; it is pompous, self-conscious, and too long. Still, great things in it. Walked home amid the Sunday crowds. Knoblock and Duff Tayler came to dinner, and it was a very lively evening, in which everyone complained that the others wouldn't give him a chance to talk. Knoblock told one of

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his best invented stories. He said he was in Greece at a hotel at Easter when an Englishman who knew classical Greek said it was quite easy to speak modern Greek if you knew classical. He said to a servant in classical Greek: "Christ is risen." The man bowed, went out, and came back with the scholar's shaving water.

Saturday, April 3rd.

I am now getting into de Burgh's "Legacy of the Ancient World". It is not very clearly written, and not easy to read; the man has apparently not a broad mind: but it is packed with the stuff, and though the fellow's writing is a bit ordinary his ideas and generalisations are pretty good and sometimes rather distinguished. In the morning, early, I went into Selfridge's, which ought not to have been open, and bought a pencil that writes in four colours and a combination magnifying-glass, inch rule, and letter-opener. All very attractive, indeed irresistible.

Wednesday, April 7th.

Lionel Barton, one of the founders of the new Arts Theatre Club, came to see me at 12.20 about the proposed production of "Don Juan" at the club theatre in the autumn. He seemed intelligent and was quiet. We discussed producers and I settled on Komisarjevsky. We discussed the casting of "Don Juan", and settled on nobody.

Thursday, April 8th.

I finished Christopher Morley's book "Thunder on the Left" yesterday. Much boomed. 70,000 copies very quickly. He even says that it will 'literally' make your hair stand on end. Why, I don't know. Some clever bits in it. But it's obscure, ill-combined, and unevenly written, and it bored me.

Sunday, April 11th.

I went up to the Maternity Home at 10 o'clock and we went back to the hotel for lunch and repose. D. and I dined at the Hanover Restaurant. Then we drove back to Welbeck Street, where I stayed till 10.30. I heard D.'s views of the psychology of nurses, and learnt a few things about the atmosphere of a Maternity Home. The doctor also threw light on the mentality

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of nurses. He said: "Of course you *must* see the humour of nurses." The nurses were admittedly very nice young women, the night nurse particularly.

75 Cadogan Square, Monday, April 12th.

At 9 a.m. received news that D. had slept $4\frac{3}{4}$ hrs. at 27 Welbeck Street. I cleared up correspondence, and arrived at Welbeck St. at 11.50. Took D. out for a short walk. At 1 I went to lunch given by International Magazine Company to Ray Long. At 3.15 I left the Ritz and went straight up to Welbeck St. I left just after 12.30 and drove home. I met Siegfried Sassoon at the Reform. I was most dramatically struck when I saw the bassinette or cradle full of clothes lying all ready outside D.'s door.

Tuesday, April 13th.

I went up to Welbeck St. at 9.30 and saw the child at 10 a.m., two hours old. She weighed 8 lb. 1 oz. and had a big head.

Wednesday. April 14th.

I arose and did oddments from 7 a.m. I cleared up oddments and answered letters till 11.30 and then drove up to 27 Welbeck St. to see Dorothy. She was in good form.

I began to work again on novel at 3.30, after a lot of fiddling about due to disturbed afternoon sleep, and worked till 5.55, writing nearly 1,200 words besides revising a lot more. Then I went up to see Dorothy again.

A few days ago Wells advised me to read *Nature* or to try to read it. This was after I had enlarged on my ignorance of all sciences. He said: "Be patient with it. Give it a chance. After a time you'll suddenly find yourself understanding some article that you've read." So I began this work. It is rather interesting.

Thursday, April 15th.

Breakfasted early, and had a lot of letters about Virginia Mary.¹ Drove to Welbeck Street and arrived there five minutes after my advertised time. 10.15. I stayed till 5 to 11 o'clock. D. was getting on, but not very much.

A great sense of rush all day. I sat in the small drawing-

¹ The names Arnold and Dorothy Bennett had given to their daughter.

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room after dinner, and smoked a cigar, but could not read. I could scarcely look at a paper even.

Friday, April 16th.

These days, going to bed early, I arise at 6.30 or 6.45, or even earlier, and do an hour's work or so before breakfast, and in addition am dressed for breakfast. I didn't dress for breakfast for years, because the *masseur* came after breakfast. I don't have him at present, as my health is so much better (owing to him). Much of my time now, while D. is in the maternity home, is taken up with her and with arranging things for her. I wrote 700 words of novel "Vanguard" in the morning and 800 in the afternoon. I was at the Home by 12 o'clock, and stayed till after 1 o'clock. Then at 2 I drove home—(these days I have to drive everywhere to save time; if I manage to walk to the top of Sloane Street it is all I can do)—and slept and went on with my novel till 4.30. Then I had chores to do.

The baby has to take the air as from Tuesday next, and there is nobody to take her out, and no perambulator for her to go in. The infant still squints a bit. Otherwise she is improving daily in appearance. It is astonishing how the nurse can be genuinely fond of the kid. She must be genuinely fond of dozens of kids every year. She is a very nice woman.

Monday, April 19th.

I arose at 5.45 and began the day. I went out after breakfast and after fiddling about, took bus to Victoria and then explored Vauxhall Bridge Road, Tachbrook Street, etc., while searching for ideas for the continuation of the "Vanguard". I found one or two skeletons of ideas for the novel, and came back fairly satisfied with the morning, but chilly.

Beverley Nichols came in to see me by appointment. I am the subject of one of the essays in his new book, and he had written to say that he wanted to look at me again, and get a proper picture into his head. So I gave him a look and two cigarettes. He left shortly after 4, and then I went up to Welbeck St. I stayed with D. till 8.10.

Tuesday, April 20th.

I reached the Nursing Home at 12.15. I was very tired, through

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walking in the Park. But I had got one gleam of an idea for my next chapter.

I dined at Reform with two fellows, and afterwards found Gardiner, Tudor Walters, Chalmers-Mitchell and a man named Wilson who I think is Chairman of G.W.R. Walters was extraordinarily informative and interesting on the subject of the coal situation.

When I came out of the Reform, it was pouring with cold rain. I drove home and the chauffeur said that 65 was the highest number in Cadogan Square. I assured him I lived at 75.

Wednesday, April 21st.

I have begun to read "Rhoda Fleming". Goodish. But he *will* make all his characters talk smart or epigrammatically, and every now and then he foolishly tried to justify this smartness by some psychological explanation. Some of the dialogues are very tedious and untrue. Still, there is stuff in the book. Last night I received the English translation of Gogol's "Evenings on a Farm". I shall read that now.

Thursday, April 22nd.

Headache all day, chiefly owing I think to the 1½ glasses of Pommery and Greno 1906 champagne that Beaverbrook gave me. At first I thought I could think (novel), but I couldn't. I meant to go out for an aimless walk, and then I saw that it was the Private View of the Seurat pictures at the Lefèvre Galleries, so I went there. The Seurat pictures want a lot of seeing to appreciate. In the big picture "Poseuses", one thing that strikes you is the loving patience of the execution—equalling Memling's, e.g., the pictures were badly framed, but according to Seurat's own ideas. Then I walked down Piccadilly, criticising new architecture, to the Yacht Club, where Eric Pinker lunched with me, and gave me news about myself and my market. He had hopes of a play or so being sold.

Then I went to the New Gallery to see the new Jannings film, "Vaudeville". It is very fine, despite a simple and rather crude story. All the pictures make 'designed pictures'. I should say the prisoners' exercise was inspired by Van Gogh. Even the empty interiors are like Cézanne. The close-ups are wonderful in design. This is where Charlie Chaplin is utterly beaten by the German film. Jannings is an exceedingly fine

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actor too, and puts Jack Barrymore right under. The film lasted 90 minutes without break. I should have liked a break.

Friday, April 23rd.

Wet again this morning. The weather has been evil for a week. I wrote 1,100 words of "The Vanguard" morning and afternoon. A little walk. To Garrick to dine with Duff Tayler at 7. John Drinkwater came in. Chudleigh¹ came in from Squire Bancroft's funeral, and told funny stories of Bancroft's own humorous behaviour at funerals. B. loved going to funerals. While amusing and amused, Chudleigh was both touched and a bit frightened by Bancroft's death. Then Tayler and I went to inspect a performance of "Riverside Nights" at Hammersmith. House packed.

Saturday, April 24th.

Reading "Evenings on a Farm" (Gogol) sent to me by Chatto's. Jolly stuff. Classical stuff; now getting a bit *démodé*. I wrote 1,100 words of "The Vanguard" at intervals during the day. I lunched at home, after going for a two-mile walk in the King's Road. I went up to the Home about 4.45, and was nursing the baby when Knoblock came into the room and was much taken aback at the spectacle.

Tuesday, April 27th.

I drove to the Sitwell Concert, "Façade". Crowds of people, snobs, high-brows, low-brows, critics and artists and decent folk. I enjoyed this show greatly. The verses are distinguished; the music (Walton) equally so.

The 'scene' (flat) by Frank Dobson was admirable.

Wednesday, April 28th.

The Herberts were taking me to Barnes Theatre to the first night of Komisarjevsky's production of "The Inspector-General". Komy produced this as a broad farce—I think rightly. Some said that some of the effects were absurd and wouldn't be understood by a Russian peasant. But I think they were traditional.

Thursday, April 29th.

I went out fairly early, and arrived at Welbeck St. just on 12

¹ The late Arthur Chudleigh, well-known London theatre lessee.

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to meet the Deputy Registrar of the Parish of All Souls (Marylebone), who brought his official book to Dorothy's bedroom, and filled it up there and we both signed it, and I gave him £1 in an envelope, and off he went. Then I walked down to the Reform and at last got the ideas I wanted for the end of my current chapter.

Friday, April 30th.

Weather still rotten. I went out to find ideas and to go to the private view at about 10.15 after having done chores. I got to the R.A. shortly after 11, having walked all the way, not feeling tired. I soon came across Lillah McCarthy. She was with Lady Simon, who left us. Then we began to meet lots of people, from Lady Oxford and daughter Bibesco upwards or downwards. Margot was strangely polite. Alfred Sutro sent his love to Dorothy. Henry Ainley came up, and in a hard clear voice said: "Arnold, how is your daughter?" I said: "I needn't tell you she's the finest kid ever born." He said: "Yes, I've got several of them myself." Robert Hudson and Lady Northcliffe his wife. Mrs. Charles Masterman, I didn't recognise her, she looked so young and simple. I left with great difficulty at 12.15, after meeting lots more people; I was home before 1 for lunch, and hadn't got a single idea for my next chapter. After sleep I stayed in my study till after 5 struggling for ideas, without any success. Then I went up to Welbeck Street.

Saturday, May 1st.

Started on the correction of the 2nd part of "Lord Raingo". Two hours or so of this, and then I went up by bus to Welbeck St. The miners' strike was on, and the posters said that the Trades Union Council had ordered a general strike in sympathy at midnight on Monday. Great gloom, especially as I had been sure of, and had prophesied, a settlement of the coal trouble.

Sunday, May 2nd.

F. Marriott called to see me. I had written him telling him about my daughter Virginia. He was very kind and agreeable, and told me a lot about Marguerite, but I told him more about Marguerite—including various things that startled him somewhat. I started again on the correcting of the last part of "Lord Raingo" and I finished it before 4 o'clock.

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Tuesday, May 4th.

To-day was the first day of the general strike. Many more motors about. I walked round to Victoria, which was shut up (both stations) one small entrance guarded by policemen. I heard someone say that a train had gone somewhere during the morning. Yet in the vast empty stations Smith's bookstalls were open. So were (outside) the cafés. The populace excited and cheery, on this 1st day of the strike. No evening paper. News from the Wireless at very short intervals, $\frac{1}{2}$ hour intervals at night up to midnight. I should think that nearly all theatres would soon be closed. Already to-day there has been a noticeably increasing gravity in the general demeanour.

Wednesday, May 5th.

Lunch at Reform at 1.30. Upstairs, Gardiner, Tudor Walters, Hedges, Jim Currie, Sassoon, and Lord Devonport. Most people gloomy, but all uncompromising. General opinion that the fight would be short but violent. Bloodshed anticipated next week. Plenty of wireless messages, futile. Typescript-printed *Times* and *Financial News*.

Thursday, May 6th.

Another N.N.E. wind. Not a taxi on the streets that I saw. It is now over a week since I did anything on the novel—the last day being Thursday, 29th April. I went for a walk to Brompton Rd. to spy out the land. Eleven buses passed the top of Sloane St. in five minutes at 4.30. Only two of them were Generals, and both of them had a window smashed. I saw more in the evening. A policeman and a special constable on every General. I drove up to see Griffin about "Lord Raingo", which he had medically vetted for me. He was very pleased with the book.

Dined at the Yacht Club, after some trouble about me not being in evening dress (a new rule I had never heard of). However, I insisted on dining there, and did. Imagine enforced evening dress in the middle of a General Strike!

Friday, May 7th.

To offices of the *New Statesman* at 2.30 for director's meeting. The *New York Herald Tribune* wired me for a strike article to be cabled to New York, 1,000 words.

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Saturday, May 8th.

I began to write my *Herald-Tribune* article at 10.5 a.m. and finished it at 12.30 (1,000 words). Lunch here alone. Then to the masseurs', and back at 4.15 to correct my article. Dr. Griffin came at 4.50 to go through with me his criticisms and suggestions as to the medical part of "Lord Raingo". I was much relieved to find that they amounted to nothing at all. The only *real* one occurred where I had made a temperature go up when it ought to have gone down. This novel is now finished, thank God! It has cost me a lot of hard labour, one way and another.

I've been reading "Le Lys dans la Vallée" lately. I've read about 140 close pages, and I don't think I shall read any more. A few pages here and there are really good. And the story is designed, organised, constructed. But the book is ruined by sentimentalism and *sensiblerie* and eloquence. There are no chapter divisions and many of the paragraphs are far too long. I wouldn't mind the dialogue being stilted, but I object to its awful eloquence. Never was there a woman, really, as angelic as Henriette, and if there was she ought to have been abandoned to a brutal and licentious soldiery. Yet when I first read this novel, perhaps thirty years ago (in a rotten English translation) I enjoyed it immensely and thought it was a masterpiece. I fear Balzac is going to pieces. The last time I read "Le Curé de Tours" even that seemed to be rather thin and tedious in parts. Ditto "Le Père Goriot". I suppose I must try to read "Splendeurs et Misères" again. If that won't pass, I'll try "Cousine Bette", which I think is the finest Balzac, and if that won't pass I shall denounce Balzac as a back number, to my extreme regret.

Sunday, May 9th.

At 2.35 I was back at Welbeck Street for the final departure and I came away with Dorothy, kid, and much miscellaneous baggage, and was duly received in state here by the servants.

During afternoon Osbert Sitwell rang up to know if he could call. He came a few minutes later, with Richmond Temple, and they had tea. Osbert was wound up in a scheme with Lady Wimborne and Lord Reading for ending the strike. Fruit of a luncheon at which Thomas was present. It appeared that Reading had tried to get at Baldwin but had been stopped by

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Churchill and F. E. The notion of a man of Reading's eminence being 'stopped' on his way to see Baldwin struck me as comic. They then both agreed that the thing sounded very improbable. I said that Reading might have reasons for saying he hadn't been able to get at Baldwin personally. I also asked if Thomas could deliver the goods.

Monday, May 10th.

Desperate efforts to resume work of "The Vanguard", which I have not touched since April 28th. I walked off to the Victoria and Albert Museum just after 10, determined to find ideas for my next chapter. Very few people in the Museum. I sat among the Constable sketches and *did* get one or two notions. Till 4 o'clock in my study I struggled to get more ideas, and about 3.40 I began to write the next chapter: less than 100 words but it was begun.

Tuesday, May 11th.

I got up just after 6, after a decent night, full of the determination to resume "The Vanguard". In the result I wrote 1,200 words of the damned thing during the day, finishing at about 4 o'clock. What I did was good. I am still sticking to my point with everyone that the calling of the general strike is a political crime that must be paid for. Also that the general strike is revolutionary, that is, aimed at the authority of the Government. How this can be denied when the Unions Council has the infernal cheek to issue permits to goods and vehicles to use the roads and railways, I cannot understand. As if anybody could possibly need permission to use roads except in a revolution.

Wednesday, May 12th.

The general strike now seems pitiful, foolish—a pathetic attempt of underdogs who hadn't a chance when the over-dogs really set themselves to win. Everybody, nearly, among the over-dogs seems to have joined in with grim enthusiasm to beat the strike. The Doctor called yesterday morning, and even he had been working at 'criminal investigations' for the Government. (He spoke of deaths resulting from East End rioting.) Willie Maugham was working at Scotland Yard till 8.30 of a night—I don't know what at. Special constables abounded.

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Thursday, May 13th.

Everyone is still preoccupied with the strike, or rather with what is called 'The new strike'. Duff Tayler told great stories of his adventurous journeys on the Tube trains driven by swagger youths in yellow gloves who nevertheless now and then overran the platform with their trains, or pulled up too short. Also of University porters with gold cigarette cases and an incredible politeness and fatherliness towards you for your safety. Maugham was what he called a 'sleuth' at Scotland Yard. A police car was sent for him always. The first night he worked all night from 11 p.m. to 8.30 a.m. He said the last few hours, after the dawn, were simply terrible, and he couldn't see how he would ever be able to get through them. I don't know what a 'sleuth' is.

Amberley, Saturday, May 22nd.

Lovely weather. I walked up on to the Downs in the middle of the morning. Sun. Prospects. Three teams of horses rolling a field. Hawthorn everywhere, a little red, all the rest white. The most insistent phenomenon, however, is the song of birds. You hear that everywhere and practically all the time. I hoped there was going to be a cricket match in the village field close by this house; but there wasn't. Nothing except a few children using the swings.

I finished "Cousine Bette". It holds you throughout, but it is very high-flown and sentimental, and the good women are far too good, and the bad a little too bad. It becomes melodramatic in the end. The "Brazilian" is used in a manner very effectively dramatic towards the end and at the end. I then began Dreiser's "An American Tragedy", a book of immense length—2 vols. 900 pages or more. Written in a very slatternly way; in fact dreadfully written. Seems ordinary at first, and in the main is ordinary; but after 40 pages it does begin to hold you. The fellow has a large sense of form, and an eye for things that count with the imagination.

After a long after-lunch sleep I sat in the drawing-room with the infant squalling like the devil under me in her bassinette—and read. The sky had covered, and it rained as hard as the baby squalled. After that I went for another walk by myself—not an interesting road, and I *did* get a few ideas for the

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"Vanguard". In fact I got enough to go on with, and now see (I think) the way to liven the darned thing up a bit.

Sunday, May 23rd.

I wrote 1,100 words of "The Vanguard" in the dining-room during the morning, after various short strolls. I meant to write another 900 words but somehow couldn't begin.

Dreiser's "An American Tragedy". I have already read 150 pages of this novel. The mere writing is simply bloody-careless, clumsy, terrible. But there is power, and he holds you, because his big construction is good. The book quite woke me up last night, just as I was going off to sleep.

Monday, May 24th.

I wrote 1,000 words of my novel "The Vanguard" during the day, despite almost continuous neuralgia. I walked little. Before tea and after tea I watched the cricket match on the village green between Amberley and a boys' school team from Worthing. It was a good, poor match. Much of the village was present, including our charwoman in a flame-coloured frock. Children swinging on swings in the corner of the field all afternoon; boys playing a little cricket of their own behind the pavilion.

I read a lot of Jules Lemaitre's "Impressions du Théâtre". Full of plots. I got a notion for a play-plot from his account of a play by Brioux. I also read a bit of Dreiser's "An American Tragedy", which is still holding me. Also more poems by Christina Rossetti, disfigured by mannerised and dull drawings by her great brother.

Tuesday, May 25th.

I heard definitely from Marguerite this morning that she would not agree to a divorce. Couldn't work. I went out for a short walk, past the castle and through fields. The spectacle grew more and more lovely. Suddenly I came to the river Arun and no bridge. A ferry which is not available during day, but a man happened to be on the spot, and he ferried me over. At Bury church I learnt that it was three miles to Amberley, unless I went back by the ferry. I wouldn't go back by the ferry. I therefore walked the three miles, and got back at 11.45, tired but in much better health. Also I had picked up some ideas for my novel *en route*. I despaired of doing any work, but

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about 5.30 I came upstairs and wrote 700 words: A triumph of will over pain and pessimism. At intervals I read Phillpotts's latest classical phantasy "Circe's Island". It is very easy to read, but not at all classical. It is just a vehicle for his philosophy of life. Fine humour in spots, and a certain agreeable general saltiness.

After dinner, Dorothy and I played for $1\frac{1}{4}$ hours, bits of "Petrouschka". Then I simply had to go to bed: weak and worn out with many days of neuralgia. Still, despite it all, I am enjoying being in the country.

Thursday, May 27th.

After breakfast I could think clearly about my novel, and soon had the ideas in order for the next chapter. I wrote 600 words before tea and 500 words afterwards. That makes 5,000 words in five consecutive days. Without counting journalising, etc. Not bad for a continuously neuralgic subject.

Monday, May 31st.

I went for a walk at 10.10 along the straight Storrington Rd., and sat on stiles while thinking out my next chapter. I was reading about Scott's methods in *The Times Lit. Suppl.* on Sunday, and it seems he wrote the last chapters of "Woodstock" at the rate of one chapter, or about thirty printed pages a day, consecutively. Well, it is almost miraculous. It must have been 5 or 6,000 words a day. And once written the stuff was not re-read or looked at, at all, until the proofs came in. If I could write anything like that I should only work six months in the year. I suppose it's true.

I nursed Virginia for 20 minutes, while D. played a Bach-Tausig Fugue, etc. It is very interesting nursing the baby for a short time; but the narrowness of the baby's interests must make it tedious quite soon. I kept the creature very 'good'.

Tuesday, June 1st.

Tremendous morning's work. In the afternoon we drove out in a Napier car with good springs and bad engine from the Norfolk Arms, Arundel. We stopped a long time at Arundel, while Dorothy shopped. Then to Climping, past Climping church (Norman 13th Cent.). Then via Rustington and Angmering, to Littlehampton. Littlehampton scarcely coincided at all with

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my memories of it—about thirty years ago. The Sharpes and F. Alcock and I slept there one night, and heard a Norwegian crew singing some songs. Most romantic. And I remembered the softness of the ebb tide, and craft coming down it swirling, and being kept straight by all hands' and then dropping a stern anchor on which they could swing themselves straight; then the anchor hiked up again.

Wednesday, June 2nd.

I wrote 1,100 words before lunch, and never went out except into the garden for 30 seconds at a time. After lunch I finished "An American Tragedy" by Dreiser. This book must be 250, or 300,000 words long. Taken as a whole it is very fine and impressive. He has held it together everywhere magnificently. It has no humour, and lots and lots of original, true psychological observations.

I had ordered the complete works of Herman Melville on Monday. They arrived yesterday in three large parcels, of which I only opened two, because I didn't want to begin reading "Pierre" (which was in the third parcel) immediately,—not until I had assimilated "An American Tragedy" a bit. So I went on with Macaulay's "Essay on Frederick the Great", which is very good reading.

Thursday, June 3rd.

This afternoon I read through the first 20,000 words of "The Vanguard" and corrected them. Not good: not utterly evil. I have now written 40,000 words—half of it.

Saturday, June 5th.

While I was working here in my bedroom, I saw a funeral come up, four men carrying a coffin on their shoulders, and some nice flowers on the coffin, and a few black-clothed villagers of both sexes behind. I wrote a few words, as it seemed, and I looked out again, and the people were coming back, minus the coffin, much disburdened, and feeling easy and free. The burden had been put down in the grave in a very short time.

Monday, June 7th.

I had a most marvellous walk on the Downs south of here this morning. The weather was warm, sunshiny, and dappled with

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sky-changes of large light clouds. The landscapes astounding. The turf very easy to walk on. I was out just under two hours, and saw three people, and two dogs and lots of sheep. After afternoon snooze I wrote 1,500 of novel straight off, before tea. After tea I thought it prudent to do no more.

Tuesday, June 8th.

This day the hatching took place in several of the four nests of house martens under the south eave of this house. To-day I saw in the June number of *La Nouvelle Revue Française* an advertisement of "Le Spectre", by Arnold Bennett. I expect I wrote this about 27 years ago.¹ Nobody thought anything of it, and I didn't. And yet the very high-brow *N.R.F.* chooses it to begin its campaign for "imposing me on the French public"; (according to the words of Gaston Gallimard, who has now written to me twice). All of which is very strange. I have sent to London for a copy of "The Ghost", so that I can see what it really is like. I know the basic idea is all right.

Wednesday, June 9th.

After a little hesitation, I set to work on a new chapter of "The Vanguard" and wrote 1,800 words in just three hours (3 o'clock to 6 o'clock). It meant ten words a minute throughout, and really more than that, because at 4.15 I made my own tea (or rather my own verveine) and partook of the same in a leisurely manner with brown bread and butter. And all this after a rotten bad night. Pride! Vainglory! In the evening (when it rained tremendously) we paddled down to Mrs. Glenister's bungalow. At the end of the evening, she turned on the loud-speaker wireless, "Valkyrie" in the room. I don't seem to be able to get over the amazing magic of this wireless device. The music seems to come to you from nowhere, and you wonder where it has been hiding while waiting for you to want it.

Thursday, June 10th.

I have now worked myself into a spell (which may prove short) of mass-production in "The Vanguard". I wrote 1,100 words before tea to-day in less than 90 minutes, and another 500 words after tea in about 30 minutes. All this, for me, is very quick work, though Trollope beat it practically the whole time,

¹ "The Ghost" was published in 1907. See Journals, Vol. I, p. 246.

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and so did Scott. Before my writing to-day I went for a walk to North Stoke in rotten, very windy weather, and got caught in only one shower, from which I protected myself under a hedge. About four miles I suppose. Then after work I went out with Dorothy up to the Downs, and I reckon by the large scale map that we walked at least four miles and a half. It was all very splendid, with skies full of disasters and great distance-effects. This makes the longest walking I have done in a day for years.

I read about half "The Ghost" yesterday. It begins brilliantly, but is not so good later on. But it is all fairly good and an excellent performance for a first book (as I believe it was). I am still puzzled by the *N.R.F.* beginning their publication of my novels with this book, but I am less puzzled than I was before. "The Vanguard" is better than "The Ghost" in truth to nature and in skill of handling material, but that it is fundamentally better in creativeness and verve, I doubt. Neither of them is more than a fantastic lark, nor pretends to be more.

Friday, June 11th.

The novel may be good or it may be bad—but I am doing it easily, and at a great rate. It is not invention that lacks, but rather imagination. John Cowper Powys¹ walked over the downs from Burpham to-day, and arrived before noon and stayed till after 5.30. He was delighted beyond measure when I spoke very highly of Dreiser's "An American Tragedy". He said Dreiser was very susceptible to praise. He said that Dreiser had sold the film rights of the novel for 50,000 dollars. Powys is a very sentimental man in many ways. He was rather in favour of the general strike, but gave in instantly to my argument that it was right to squash it; but I expect he is in favour of it again by this time. He has very fine literary taste, except when it is misled by his few prejudices. I asked him about his days (not evenings) in provincial cities in America. He said he did nothing except walk about. He wanted to work, i.e. write, but couldn't work in hotel bedroom; at least had not seriously tried to. I told him I had written lots and lots on hotel bedrooms and he said that he should try. An untidy fellow, of very great charm.

¹ Lecturer, novelist, poet and philosopher.

Thursday, June 10th.

I did my usual 1,600 words in the main idea of the high-road lot of proofs of

Friday, June 11th.

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Sunday, June 12th.

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Thursday, June 17th.

I did my usual quantity of novel this morning, with great ease. 1,600 words in a few minutes over 90 minutes. Further, I got the main idea for the chapter in about five minutes, while pacing the high-road at the bottom of the playing-field. I corrected a lot of proofs of "Raingo" and thought it wasn't so bad.

Friday, June 18th.

I walked out at 9.50 to get ideas, but didn't get just what I wanted, so I came in and instead of trying to write the un-kneaded I corrected about 15,000 words of "Lord Raingo" proof. Then I went out for another walk, and got my ideas a bit clearer for "The Vanguard". I wrote 1,800 words of them in the afternoon.

I have begun to read "Two or Three Graces" because Aldous Huxley is coming on Sunday for the night, and I must know something about his new book.

As regards my novel, I now write it straight off without re-reading what I have done or what I am doing. I don't re-read it until a few weeks after it is completed. This will both save trouble and give the thing a better chance in a final revision. But it means keeping your head pretty level while planning and writing the chapters.

Yesterday Ralph Pinker wrote to ask if I would do an article on "Marriage 100 years hence" for the *Daily News* at 2s. 6d. a word. I said I would. This is my highest price for journalism up to now. What footling subjects these editors choose. Only the other day I wrote on "What is the right age to marry" for the *Daily Express*!

Sunday, June 20th.

Dorothy and I went by the meadows towards the Arun, for a bit of a stroll towards noon. After lunch we waited about for Aldous Huxley, who had said he would come soon after lunch. In the meantime a strange man came up to me in the garden—I don't know how he got there, he was merely there—and said he wanted to photograph me. I dealt with him as I do always with these fellows,—said we were brother journalists and I didn't *want* to be photo'd and I was sure he would understand. He did: he gave in at once, but asked me to go out and speak to his 'art-director' who was outside. So I went out, and we

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had a most cheery triangular chat for 15 minutes in the middle of the road. Both the men were very agreeable and decent. We parted great friends. Aldous Huxley, driven by Julian Huxley and wife, arrived about 4.45. I didn't recognise Julian. We all went for the 'meadows' walk.

Tuesday, June 22nd.

We went in a car to Arundel at 2.45 to shop. I spent the half hour at Norfolk in seeing the two principal churches there. The parish church has been the subject of a row between a Duke of Norfolk and the Church of England. After a law case, the Duke got the chancel, and the Church of England got the nave and a solid wall was built to separate them. This reminded me of the soldiers keeping the peace between rival Christians in the big church at Jerusalem.

Wednesday, June 23rd.

My ideas were not sufficiently creative for me to go on with the next chapter of "The Vanguard"; so I went on correcting the last 30 odd galley proofs of "Lord Raingo". I finished these immediately after lunch. Some portions of Part 2 I think are dull, and lacking in drama, being merely descriptive if taken separately. I may, however, be wrong, as I was very tired while correcting them, I was tired physically as well as a bit mentally.

I fiddled about until nearly 6 p.m. in the afternoon, and then wrote 1,000 words of "The Vanguard" in less than 90 minutes. I ached all over with something rheumatical.

Virginia is visibly growing up daily. She has learnt how to make noises and likes to make them.

Friday, June 25th.

I walked in the morning along my now-fixed Storrington Road, which suits me very well for thinking because it is not distracting, and then I began to write. 900 words before lunch, 500 before tea and 500 after tea: after which I went for a walk on the Downside with Dorothy.

Hearing a "Twilight of the Gods" record on Thursday night, I had a mood for really lifting up the love scene between Harriet and Luke to-day in "The Vanguard": but I doubt if actually I did lift it up very much.

Sunday, June 26th.

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Thursday, June 29th.

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JUNE 22-JULY 8, 1926

Sunday, June 27th.

I finished reading "Pierre". This novel is not equal to "Moby Dick"; but it is full of very fine things, and a most remarkable book. Melville's idea was the grand romantic manner, and when he succeeded in it, he *did* succeed. His humour, too, is very rich. I think he must have been influenced by Rabelais, though there is nothing Rabelaisian in the book. The pity is he gets so many incidents improbable, when with a little more invention and trouble he might have made them quite probable. Nevertheless I think it is entitled to be called a great book—even if *manqué* here and there.

Wednesday, June 30th.

Heavenly weather. Awake three hours in middle of night. Before lunch I finished 70,000 or $\frac{3}{4}$ ths of "The Vanguard". This was at the rate of 800 words an hour. Dorothy is reading the typescript of the first half of this novel, and is certainly held by it. To-day I had a letter from Ralph Pugh, head of the 'British Authors Productions Ltd.' (film company) in which he gives the names of the authors (including Galsworthy, Conan Doyle, and me) who have sold options on their work to the company, and asks whether I will sit for a 'group photograph' of all the authors together! Good God!

Saturday, July 3rd.

Eleven hundred words of "The Vanguard" in morning, after a good night. I felt very well. We drove over to Tertia's house which she has rented for three months at Aldwick, near Bognor, after lunch. Pauline Smith was there. Very silent. But with more secret fire in her than any of them.

Thursday, July 8th.

I finished "The Vanguard" to-day at 4.15, having written 5,500 words of it in two days. I began the work on 8th February in Rome; it was very seriously interrupted by the birth of Virginia, and I wrote the 10 or 12,000 words of it all over afresh, and I'm glad I did it. I wrote the last two-thirds of it here at Amberley in 44 days. I have never worked more easily than during the last six weeks.

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Friday, July 9th.

Yesterday while waiting at Amberley station for Dorothy's train I was told by the porter that in alternate weeks he started work (now I forget whether it was) 4.45 or 5.15, but I think the latter. He said he belonged to a 'band'. I found that his band consisted of six, and he played the fiddle. They played for dancing at house-parties, etc., and got a fair amount of jobs in the winter and a few in summer. He said that one night not long since he finished off at 3 a.m. or later, and had to be at work at 5.15 (or 4.45). I asked him if he practised daily. He said no—practice was more necessary when you were learning than later! I said: "But of course it's always an advisable thing, isn't it?" He agreed.

Saturday, July 10th.

Y. came at 6.55, leaving a bag marked in large letters "Foreign Office". In some talk after dinner I found that he had strangely unscientific ideas. Some pamphlet of Haldane's had actually persuaded him there was a prospect in the future of making synthetic babies, and he really believed that some very low form of animal life had actually been made by synthesis. He stuck to it. It had not occurred to him that any such feat would have made an absolutely unique stir in the world, and make such a step in knowledge as no other step could be compared to. He began to argue like this: "But nobody thirty years ago would have believed about wireless." He hadn't seen that the two things were not comparable, wireless being purely a mechanical affair. In short I was shocked by his attitude. Later, he gave in.

Monday, July 12th.

I wrote another article this morning—on Dickens's "A Tale of Two Cities", 1,200 words, with extraordinary ease. This makes three articles in three days (excluding Sunday) following the finish of "The Vanguard". This was very good, considered as industry and as ability to go straight on after a longish work.

Thursday, July 15th.

At 8.10 I dashed off to the Savoy for the dinner of the Other Club. This was a very agreeable evening. I sat between

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JULY 9-JULY 21, 1926

Anthony Hope and Archie Sinclair. A. S. told me a lot about religion in Scotland and his own views. Mason was fine on Morocco and Lyautey, etc. Among those present: Masterman, William Berry, Kysant, Guest, Trenchard, Reading, Marlborough, Robert Horne (in the chair), John Seely, Frank Hodges, Hilton Young. Quite a lot of champagne was drunk, and the laughter—Reading, Horne, Seely and Hodges—was most uproarious during the latter part of the evening. Neither Birkenhead nor Churchill could come (being in the House) and Lloyd George had a chill. I stayed till the end, 11.20 or so, and then drove home.

75 Cadogan Square, Friday, July 16th.

The other day Philip Nichols was urging that it was undignified for me to write for Sunday papers, etc. But I argued him out of it. I have rather a passion for a big public and plain subjects.

Monday, July 19th.

Dorothy and I had to go to a Lunch of Canadian teachers and wives given by Lady Beaverbrook at Stornoway House. Max has brought the whole lot over at his own expense and pays everything. The lunch was well done. Jack Seely, on account of his Canadian political and military connections, was the chief guest. They were a very decent lot indeed, and I liked them. By the way, they call citizens of the United States 'Americans'. Max was shy as usual; he gave me a great cynical wink now and then. He even hid himself sometimes. I didn't get home till 4 p.m., when I slept a bit. Then more reflection on new story, and correction of MS. of "The Vanguard", and of an article.

Wednesday, July 21st.

We went to the Ruth Draper matinée. A packed and putrid matinée audience at the Garrick, nearly all women. Laughing in all the wrong places—giggling, whispering. Tea-drinking. Ruth is very clever. She is a wonderful imitator, but not much of a creator. Some things, however, such as the English-woman showing her garden were splendidly cruel. Others feeble and formless. The observation seems to be exact but superficial. She is highly skilled, and looks nice.

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I am still reading "Sous le Soleil de Satan". It is definitely not good, but I mean with God's help to finish it.

Thursday, July 22nd.

This day Dorothy came 'definitely' to live here, and slept in her own bedroom next to mine. Most of her furniture was also moved in.

Tomlinson told me that he was getting on with his novel¹; but it is very slow—the hardest work, and very difficult. But he seemed fairly satisfied with the result. He was in a rather grim and even savage mood at lunch, and quite as deaf as usual.

Friday, July 23rd.

We have a new temporary cook, rather aged. I had ordered a water-ice for dinner. She announced to Fred: "I have poured the water on the ice for the water-ice!"

Saturday, July 24th.

I walked after breakfast to the Tate Gallery, and heard a lot of a very good lecture in the French room on 19th Cent. French painters.

I feel much relieved now that I chucked that blasted book "Sous le Soleil de Satan", which has made such a stir in France—no doubt because the devil is one of the characters in it. It is not a good book; in fact it is a dull book. I am now reading Trevelyan's new "History of England"; which will be a bigish task to finish. Miss Nerney stayed here all afternoon typing out "The Vanguard". What a factory! I shall have to correct the whole of that in the next few days. It is impossible for me to read as much as I think I ought to read.

Monday, July 26th.

Wakened by a "History of England" falling on the floor at 3.25. I should have had a good night if that damned book hadn't fallen. By strict attention to business, I wrote 1,100 words of my *nouvelle*, with which I was not ill-pleased.

To the Royalty Theatre at 7.59 for the first night of Arthur Richman's "The Awful Truth", with Margaret Mower (an old acquaintance of Dorothy's) and Eadie. Around us were Annie Thursfield, Carl Brandt and wife, Lady Troubridge, and a

¹ "Gallions Reach".

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mannish, middle-aged woman whose name I always forget. We all thought that the play was *terrible* in its old-fashioned badness. Appalling. I went to sleep in Act II.

Friday, July 30th.

The day began with a heavy shower followed by drizzle, which prevented me from walking and so getting my ideas. So I drove to the Tate Gallery and got my ideas; I also saw for the first time the basement galleries containing many dreadful Sargent water-colours and a whole collection of modern French small pictures, including Braque. I also heard one of the Tate lecturers, not so good as the one I listened to the other day. This was a younger man, and much more of a finicking highbrow. He was talking of Romney, and rather severely. He said that "Romney was often vulgar—that explained why he was so fond of Emma" (Hamilton). True, perhaps, but this young man's style was far too condescending. I wrote 1,000 words of my *nouvelle*. I drive it on by force somehow. I really ought to have gone out for a walk afterwards, but I was too tired.

I continue to read Trevelyan's history, but I don't read enough at a time.

Saturday, July 31st.

I walked to Victoria after breakfast, just to see the sight, which was worth seeing. The Bank Holiday crowd was about the size I expected. Long, thick queues in various places of the station, both inside and outside. But all quite orderly. And the sight of the 3rd class Pullman was satisfactory. Although far more people travel now than 40 years ago, they travel far more comfortably and with more dignity. I saw no crushing and crowding. Nevertheless it must be quite an enterprise to take a family away, with all baggage, on the Saturday before Bank Holiday. In the late afternoon, when I walked down King's Road as far as The World's End, there was proof that most of London had stayed in London. The side streets of King's Road are at least as interesting as the main road itself. I suppose painters don't paint them more because they can't get a calm "sitting".

I began to go through my books with a small tooth-comb, as I have no more room and there are hundreds lying about,

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and therefore hundreds must be sold. I hope to finish this job to-morrow. Before dinner and after dinner I read in "Pausanias's Description of Greece". It is really a tourist's guide-book. Stuffed with guide information, but rather curt. Some of it is very interesting and all of it must have been interesting to people of his own time. I shan't read any more of it, because it is all more or less the same, and because the thousands of proper names are very confusing, and little if anything remains in the memory.

Sunday, August 1st.

In the afternoon I walked up to Hyde Park and the first thing I heard was a military band playing the Meistersinger overture. It sounded very odd indeed, all transmogrified, and it was not at all well played. Very few people in the 2½d. reserved seats, but plenty of applause. The Sunday afternoon crowd in the Park was decidedly less than usual. A girl or so sitting by herself bored. Ditto a young man or so. Sad spectacles on a holiday.

I read 60 or 70 pages of "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" at last. It is very good in its way, and shows good observation. But it is also very monotonous. I shan't read any more of it.

Monday, August 2nd.

I strolled off in the morning heat to South Kensington Museum to find ideas for the next chapter of the *nouvelle*, and after a time I did find them. As I was sitting in the large front hall to right of entrance making notes, a middle-aged man accosted me uncertainly and asked if I was A. B. I was very amazed and said curtly, "Yes. Who are you?" He said: "Oh, no one. A very humble admirer. I've never seen you before, but I recognise you," etc., etc. He wouldn't go. A shabby man, who spoke English with a marked accent. He might have been some Indian mixture—I don't know. He interrupted my work by a piece of damned cheek, but it is somehow flattering.

Tuesday, August 3rd.

I went to the Tate Gallery in the morning, and soon got all the ideas I wanted for my *nouvelle*: I also saw several pictures I hadn't noted before, including Daumier's "The Good Samaritan". This picture ought to be upstairs, and not hidden away.

Wednesday,

I had lunch at a fixture with me at the club restaurant. The first two chapters were done by noon, because I was on the stairs and I was in my study. I think it is a better than I and yet it seems

Friday, August 4th.

Walked up F Street to a luncheon of the International author of "C". I was put to talk easily and slight, and life in the morning had given up. I found she could only with a thing that she had read previously found it difficult. She has large. Slight tired.

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AUGUST 1-AUGUST 7, 1926

Wednesday, August 4th.

I had lunch at the Yacht Club. This has now become a regular fixture with me. It will cease soon, and I shall vanish from the club restaurant as mysteriously as I came. I read the first two chapters of "A Pair of Blue Eyes" yesterday afternoon, because my Trevelyan's "History of England" was upstairs and I was too idle to fetch it down and all my Hardy's were in my study at hand. I liked these chapters. They were better than I should have expected in an early book. At least I think it is an early book. I had never read it before (I think) and yet it seemed familiar.

Friday, August 6th.

Walked up Regent Street to the Ambassadors Club in Conduit Street to a lunch given by Vernon Mackenzie, the London editor of the International Magazine company, to meet Anita Loos, author of "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes". A long narrow table. I was put opposite to Anita. She was all right. We could talk easily across the plank called a table. She is *very* short and slight, and dark. She said she had spent nearly all her life in the movies, writing scenarios. As regards literature, she had given up imitating others (such as Flaubert) because she found she couldn't get her effects with a large vocabulary, but only with a small and very simple one. And so on. Showing that she *had* some artistic interest in the business. She had read philosophy, but had given it up, because she had found it didn't get her anywhere. This is just my attitude. She has large dark tired eyes, and is very much a brunette. Slight tired drawl.

After tea I had a sleep, and then by some miracle I wrote the most difficult section of my *nouvelle*, 800 words in about an hour and 20 minutes.

Saturday, August 7th.

This afternoon I finished all except the last big scene of my *nouvelle*. The most difficult part is the one I have just done, and it is not so bad as I feared. I found a new way of getting to the Tate Gallery, via Victoria and thence by tram. It has taken me some years to think of this, but I have thought of it. With luck fifteen minutes will cover the whole thing. I

heard part of a good but too detailed lecture on Hogarth as a storyteller, and then devoted myself to the Blake drawings, which I have always avoided here hitherto. What terrific stuff. These in their largeness and simplifications are quite as good on inspection as any for the novelist who is trying to move on a high plane.

Sunday, August 8th.

I lunched with D. here; and then felt that I must have some adventure. It was a very nice afternoon, with threatening clouds. I hurried out and taxied to St. Paul's, which is still half closed and no doubt will be for years.¹ Still it is neatly and tidily half closed. Immense flock of tame pigeons on the piazza, being fed. A congregation (sparse) assembling inside for a service. I then took a bus for Hackney Wick. I thought that would do as well as anywhere. But before I got to the Wick I saw buses going in the opposite direction to Blackwall Tunnel, which I had never seen. So I got off, and took one of these latter, and went all down the Burdett Road into East India Docks Road to Poplar, and I saw big steamers and even a fine 3-master, and a huge home or hostel for sailors. Incidentally the top of the slope leading to the tunnel. The thoroughfares are superb in width and very clean, and I noted lots of very interesting things. The East End keeps on till you get to Aldgate when it stops all of a sudden, and you begin to see Theatre Ticket Agencies. I should have been late for tea if I had not taken a taxi at St. Paul's again. But all the round trip to and from St. Paul's—I should think about 10 miles—I did in buses.

Wednesday, August 11th.

I finished my *novelle* yesterday afternoon. 20,400 words, written in 23 days. It may not be good, but it cannot be very bad. I now want a really striking title for it.

Thursday, August 12th.

I had a great desire to go and see what the other side of the river was like opposite the Tate Gallery, and so, by tram and bus, I went. What a quick change there is immediately you

¹ The choir of St. Paul's was closed for repairs on the dome, April 1, 1925, and was opened again by the King on June 25, 1930.

cross. Stone horses than the physical labour Vauxhall Bridge of road traffic. streets, such a bridge—at once The whole esc

Saturday, August 13th.

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Tuesday, August 15th.

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AUGUST 8-AUGUST 17, 1926

cross. Stone setts instead of wood or asphalt. *Many* more horses than the N. side. Much more noise, more dirt. More physical labour. There are various big factories just close to Vauxhall Bridge, not to mention the railways. A great press of road traffic. Semi-slums. I walked up several semi-slummy streets, such as 'Italian Walk'. Then I went back over the bridge—at once calmness, quiet, and no horses. Very dramatic. The whole escapade only took me a little over an hour.

Saturday, August 14th.

I soon began to think about my new short story this morning, and I wrote 500 words of it this afternoon. But I was very tired in the afternoon. I walked up to the Wallace Collection, across the park, in the morning, and had a look at some fine pictures.

I read about half of Croft's "The Cask" and now I have got tired of it and shan't read any more. I read, at night, a short story, "The Case of Brodster" (in a new World's Classics volume "Stories of Crime and Detection"). This was the first thing I have read by Austin Freeman. Though hurried, and a bit forced, it is very good indeed. I also read one or two stories in "Russian Short Stories" (World's Classics), by Garshin, etc. Only goodish. Then I went back to Trevelyan's "History of England", like a boy who has been playing truant. I am now trying to read too many books at once.

Monday, August 16th.

I wrote 600 words of short story before 11 a.m., and 500 words after 6 p.m. of short story. At 11 a.m. I suddenly went off to the Oval to see an hour of the 5th and last Test Match. Crowd very quick to take up every point. Every maiden over cheered, for instance. Women fainting here and there. Attendants to look after them. Cricket cautious and very slow. Great roar when Woodfull's wicket fell. Met the Sword Brothers, the elder of whom accosted me. Short talk with them. Heat of the crowd. Great difficulty of seeing anything at all, even by tiptoeing and craning.

Tuesday, August 17th.

In spite of interruptions I wrote 1,300 words of my new short story before lunch. A hot day. Later in the day I decided

on the title of my *nouvelle*, to wit "The Woman Who Stole Everything".

Viola Tree was bidden to lunch for 1 p.m. She was very good, strange, bizarre, vague, and original as usual. She has a most marked and often very sympathetic individuality. She hated the Lido, where we are supposed to be going.

Royal Albion Hotel, Brighton, Saturday, August 21st.

We came down to the above hotel by the 3.5 train. Dennis and May Eadie were in the train. Dennis excessively gloomy about the theatre. Yet he is a charming and an honest man, and we like him.

Harry Preston came to see us in the restaurant, and began his proceedings by giving me three very good Corona cigars. At least the one I smoked was very good. I gave him a cigar—the first thing I have ever given him.

Sunday, August 22nd.

At 4.35 we hired a car and went to take tea at the Lewises, The Grange, Rottingdean. About 10 or 12 people there. Sir George Lewis had ridden two hours on the Downs, had bathed, and had played tennis. Both Sir G. and Lady Lewis curiously and naïvely house-proud and garden-proud. The garden is fine, with various lawns and good trees and fruit. Lewis explained how he had bought a hill on the Downs in order to preserve a view unspoilt. He has 71 acres of his own. He is very agreeable as an Oriental is agreeable. Lady Lewis also was most agreeable; she kissed Dorothy like anything at parting, yet had scarcely known her before. They were extremely hospitable. I had quite a chat with Sir G. and Lady, in the former's little room where he works—for he always works. They were most insistent on me arranging for German translation of my books.

Monday, August 23rd.

A misty morning. Yesterday at dinner a man walked across the dining-room and thanked me for writing my books. He then wrote a note and sent it to me by the *maitre d'hôtel*, apologising for his bad form. In this note he excused himself by saying that he had just parted from a son—gone to Singapore for five years. I think he had had too much to drink.

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AUGUST 21-AUGUST 26, 1926

Elizabeth Lewis came for lunch, and Harry Preston had a special grouse cooked for us. Harry, wife and child drove us to his country house, beyond Burgess Hill, for tea, and we had to have eggs for tea. It is a small house, with large grounds. The kennels are his pride—bull-terriers. He was very 'down' on Alsations, which he said were the rage but were very treacherous and soon reverted to the wolf.

I have been reading "A l'ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs", and I still maintain that it is a bit on the dry side, though very good. It doesn't impassion *me*. I shouldn't care much if I didn't read any more of it. It lacks juice. It has almost no concern with anything except analysis of views and feelings—especially snobbishness. No landscapes, no furniture, no corporate life. No general 'feel' of things. This sort of business satisfies Walkley, but it could never satisfy me, in a novelist.

Tuesday, August 24th.

Very little reading to-day. Idleness is the death of reading. So is industry.

75 Cadogan Square, Thursday, August 26th.

At 11 a.m. I bussed and walked up to Charing Cross Road and bought "Lamiel", a novel by Stendhal that I had never seen, and couldn't remember ever having heard of; also Vollard's little book on Cézanne, which is very interesting; also a selection of the writings of Charles Maurras; also an Ital.-Engl.-Engl.-Ital. Dictionary. I saw *the* Engl.-Ital. Dict. Hoare's 2 guineas, but it is a quarto and far too big to travel with. Then I came home again, somewhat sated, and had lunch with Dorothy. Then I bussed and walked to Hammersmith for the Lyric Board meeting, where I was told that the author of "Tommy, make room for your uncle", composed in 1876, had come into the theatre to hear his own song sung, and was pleased with the performance thereof. Such is life.

Noel Coward and Molly Seton Kerr came to dinner. I was once again very pleased with Coward. I think he will come through in one way or another. He is a serious young man, with a sense of humour. He would have nothing to drink at all, except water. And he left early—10.35—because he had an early rehearsal to-morrow. Imagine it!

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I read about half of Vollard on Cézanne, and I began to read "Lamiel".

Sunday, August 29th.

I was determined to write another impression, and did so, though it took me some time to get a subject. I walked down to Albert Bridge to get it, and I got it, and came back and wrote it.

I seemed to spend a great deal of time reading Wells's "William Clissold", of which I nearly finished the first vol. I also nearly finished Stendhal's "Lamiel".

At about 5.15 Dorothy and I went out for a City excursion. We drove to St. Paul's Cathedral first, of which the front was in the usual Sunday mess; a fearful litter of paper, and kids feeding the birds, and hawkers: all extremely untidy, slatternly, etc. Even offensive. The inside was as it was the last time; but I saw the dreadful Watts's pictures. Also "The Light of the World". It is all pretty dreadful, and I suppose it will remain so for years—until the repairs are at last finished. Something ought to be done about the front space on Sunday afternoons.

Then we walked on to Southwark Bridge and on to London Bridge (both very empty) and had a good look at Adelaide House (by London Bridge); this is a rather remarkable office building, done under strong American influence. It is very interesting. We saw also a number of alleys and lanes. Then from London Bridge approach we took a bus to the Bank, and at the Bank another bus to Sloane Square.

We then dressed and went to the Savoy Café for dinner. Hadn't been there since last December. Saw Golding Bright and wife. The latter started immediately to talk of the baby and thence jumped to her own baby (killed in the war I think). "He'd have been thirty to-day, if he'd lived." She was absorbed in babies. She's 65, and thinks always of her son.

Monday, August 30th.

I finished reading "The World of William Clissold", Vol. I, and I thoroughly enjoyed it; it held me; I read it with gusto. So in the evening I wrote to Wells and told him so.

I finished the "Lamiel" of Stendhal during the night, I also read a lot more of Vollard's "Cézanne". This book gets

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better as it goes on. I leave it behind me with regret. I read the opening of "The Regent", and was so struck by its solid and amusing excellence that I had another copy found for my own use, and I am taking it away with me.

In Simplon-Orient Express (between Paris and Brigue), Tuesday, August 31st.

I left with Dorothy at 10.50 a.m. The journey went very smoothly. No delays. The sea quite smooth, and lovely weather throughout. We drove across Paris to the Gare de Lyon.

The nights on these trains are still barbaric in their arrangements. *Why* should one be awakened at 5 a.m. because one is entering Switzerland. We only go through Switzerland, etc., etc. Sleep is exceedingly difficult. Still, I got some and Dorothy got more. Dorothy read a lot of Galsworthy. I read some of "The Regent". Parts of it are very good. But there are dull parts in it too.

Hotel Commercio, Venice, Wednesday, September 1st.

After a long journey (beginning as regards this day with a heavenly breakfast at 7 a.m. in the train and brightened by the sharp self-consciousness which one has after a bad night, and proceeding by Lakes Maggiore and Garda) we arrived at Venice at 5.21, only six minutes late. We plunged straight into a gondola. We liked the Hotel Commercio because it is not in the least the *genre Palace*. The scene on the Piazza, and in the small square (giving on the Canal) where the big band was playing, were simply marvellous at night. Unique.

Friday, September 3rd.

At Florian's we met the Lee Mathews and many more, a Miss Beauclerk, who wrote the "Green Pavilion" (or some such title—I forget). And I went and sat for a bit at Dulac's table, where I was to meet and did meet, Dulac. He assured me that he had promised Puccini some old Chinese tunes for "Turandot". He forgot the matter, and Puccini wrote and reminded him. Dulac then composed some Chinese tunes himself, and sent them, and Puccini used some of them. Then to *terrasse* of Florian again. Lots of acquaintances. Band play-

ing Wagner on a marvellous temporary bandstand in centre of Piazza. Sudden shower of rain. *Terrasses* emptied in a moment, and colonnades crammed. The band seemed to have been magically dissolved away by the rain. It was all very wonderful.

I heard that a film company is paying the city a million lira for the right to use the city as a background.

Saturday, September 4th.

I had an appointment with Alf Mason¹ at Florian's at 11.30. Previously I had seen Dulac and Miss Beauclerk, etc. Alfred and I went off in his gondola to see the Accademia. A fine gondola all black and gold with the funny extra furniture of a chair to match. Very comfortable. I was rather disappointed with my first view of the Accademia. The pictures seemed to be too exclusively Venetian, and I could not see Titian's "Assunta". We stayed there till exhaustion set in, and then went by small canals to Ristorante Bonvecchiato for lunch. Picturesque and good. Then we walked and got lost, until suddenly I saw a street I knew, close to this hotel. But I could not have found my way back to Bonvecchiato though it could not be more than a third of a mile off.

Saw Mrs. Lindsay in the Florian colonnade and she re-introduced me to Lady C., who wanted me to exert myself to get the O.M. for George Moore. She said that Balfour was favourable but would never actually do anything to help anyone.

Sunday, September 5th.

We hired a gondola this morning and went to Church of St. John and St. Paul and then to the small Church of Something dei Miracoli, very grand and quiet, but not thrilling. Then on to Grand Canal, which we came down, seeing all the flags and carpets exposed to decorate houses for the Regatta this afternoon. It was certainly a most wonderful and lovely scene. We also inspected two hotels, the Europa and the Britannia, with a view to moving from the Commercio. We liked both of these hotels, and at the Britannia were offered the apartment where Verdi had composed "Rigoletto" (a bad opera) at 450 lira a day. We could decide on nothing, as nothing (except the Verdi) was free.

¹ A. E. W. Mason.

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Hotel Britannia, Venice, Thursday, September 9th.

A heavy day. After buying sandwiches, etc., we went off in a launch to Torcello, calling on the way home at Burano. Torcello church is exceedingly fine as to the interior, and the adjoining church interesting as an exterior. There are some low reliefs of animals in the former which are lovely, but, as they were not mentioned in the guidebook, of course we could not guess the period with any accuracy. Tourists would be most uncomfortably helpless without guide books.

Burano is the lace place. The women work in the doorways of the houses, over coloured paper upon which the pattern is printed or carboned. We saw one old hag with her hair hanging down; she was doing nothing. Portraits of *il Duce* on all the walls. The launch had a deckhouse with flowers and hand mirror, and was quite nice. Two hands, both very charming. We dismissed the launch at the Lido, and saw Mason, and had tea there, and we then came home with him. Both of us completely exhausted by a long day out, we got home broken at 11. No sooner was I in bed than my mosquito canopy fell down and the wooden frame gave me a good crack on the head.

Saturday, September 11th.

We went to the Scuola di San Rocca to see Tintoretto and Titian. It is, however, impossible to see these pictures owing to them being very dark and hung between great windows which dazzle the eye and darken the pictures. So we couldn't appreciate them. Two great thrills to-day. The Bellini altar piece (tri-partite) in the Frari church this morning, and this afternoon we went to the Giovanetti palace, and saw Giorgione's 'Storm' (of which I keep a reproduction in my bedroom). Marvellous! Un-human. So rich and full and harmonious. Finer than I had hoped for. The palace has a tremendous series of communicating salons, with a huge ball-room. All heavily furnished, with much ugly stuff, but rich. The hundreds and hundreds of candles had been turned to electricity. We went in a 2-man gondola, and went home by the lagoon to the Piazzetta.

Sunday, September 12th.

I arose at 6, said good-bye to Dorothy 7.50 and caught the 9 a.m. train for Milan. I read Galsworthy's "Silver Spoon"

most of the day, finishing it before dinner. It held me, and I thought it very good in its own limits. I think most of the press criticisms are too severe. The criticisms of Wells's "Clissold" are much too severe.

75 Cadogan Square, Tuesday, September 14th.

Pauline (Smith) lunched here and rested and took advice, and then went back to the Royal Court Hotel to change for dinner. She dined here at 7.5, and I took her to the first night of Margaret Kennedy's and Basil Dean's "The Constant Nymph" at the New Theatre. Mary Moore (who takes some of the swag), was in a box. Literature was highly represented by Wells, Maugham, Galsworthy, and myself. The first act of the play was masterly: but Galsworthy insisted that it was all good, which it was not. 2nd act inferior to 1st, and 3rd inferior to 2nd. I liked best Coward, Mary Clare, and Helen Spencer (who played in "London Life"). The performance lasted three hours and a quarter at least, and the atmosphere of the theatre was stifling.

Friday, September 17th.

Rudolf Kommer dined with me at the Garrick Club. He told me that "The Great Adventure" was supposed to open with Pallinger and a fine comedienne, in Berlin on 25th, but he had cabled and written urgently to get it postponed for a week in order to allow for more rehearsals. He said that the 16 days allowed for rehearsing was an average period in Germany, where runs are shorter than here, but that it wasn't enough for "The Great Adventure". Kommer has done the translation himself. He is very keen on translating "The Pretty Lady", to which he gave the very highest praise, and which he said would have a greater success in Germany than it had had in England or America.

Cherkley Court, Leatherhead, Saturday, September 18th.

I left for Cherkley¹ at 2.45 in a car, and after various stoppages *en route* by thickness of traffic, and losing our way several times after passing Leatherhead—I arrived at 4.15. At first I found only Jean Norton, on the verandah. Then Max appeared. Only

¹ The country house of Lord Beaverbrook.

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the three of us to dinner. I indulged in champagne and peaches and dozed during a film which Max inflicted on us. This film, entitled "The City of Sin" is certainly the worst film, from the point of view of intelligence, that I ever saw. But it is worth seeing because of its deliberate exploitation of public ingenuous religious feeling and its own staggering ingenuousness. We saw only parts 1, 2, 3, and 6. But I wish we had seen it all. It has to be seen to be believed. After this I felt much better, and quite wakeful. A lot of newspaper talk, especially about journalists. I was undecided whether to go to bed or to wait up for Noel Coward, who was due to arrive (fast car) at 12.15. Time passed. I didn't go to bed. Coward arrived just after 12.30 quite fresh. At 12.50 I said: "Well, having glimpsed him, I'm going to bed." But we all went to bed at the same time. 2 a.m. This is twice this week that late bed has happened to me. I was vexed with myself. But I argued: Why not break out sometimes, and suffer a little! As a fact, I had quite a good night.

Sunday, September 19th.

Arose and ate apples and shaved and had breakfast in room. Noel Coward greeted me out of his window, and ultimately got downstairs. He and I had a long talk about personalities before the others appeared. Tea and talk. Talk afterwards. No exercise. No walking. No games. Lloyd George and Miss Stephenson, and Sir Warren Fisher (head of the Treasury, I think) and Lady Ebury came to dinner. But the *clou* of the evening was the Arnold Dolmetsch family, who came to play. We heard them playing while we were finishing dinner, and one by one we popped into the drawing-room to salute them. Father is just like a gnome, hair all over his face, and a strange, clear, pure, impish, masterful glance. Maureen is the sister of Sir Harry Johnston. Adolescent boy of about 19, girl of about ditto, and a younger boy who was much bored. They all play all the instruments; some of the instruments very beautiful. Music of the highest class—all 16 and 17th cent., admirably played.

JOURNAL OF ARNOLD BENNETT

Eltham, Torquay, Tuesday, September 21st.

I left at 11.30, and caught the noon express to Torquay. Shared a compartment with two middle-aged gentlemen with out-door faces, about which I propose to write an article. I had been rather gloomy and preoccupied before, but as soon as I had written down the notes for the short article I felt better. Emily Phillpotts met me, to my great surprise.

Adelaide was rather quieter than usual, but had little bursts of talking. We had a tremendous literary and social pow-wow—just as usual—interrupted by a short view of the garden. This pow-wow went on from 4 to 7, without a break, and it will certainly be continued to-night.

Wednesday, September 22nd.

I began to write an article about the journey yesterday at 7.30 a.m. after quite a fair night. I fear for my projected average of 1,000 words a day for the year. I am already a day behind it.

Last evening, we listened extensively to the wireless. It soon gets boring, in fact as soon as one has got used to the marvel of it. All sounds are somewhat falsified—thickened. Still, it is all very marvellous.

I wrote an article during the day, in three instalments of time. Talk with Eden in garden, about 'shop' matters. He goes on working rather harder than ever. He says he has nothing else to do, and would vanish if he didn't work. Adelaide also is a great worker. She said that in London she goes to bed at 10.30 (and lies awake thinking) and gets up at 7.30. Works at desk most of morning, walks before tea, and works after tea.

75 Cadogan Square, Saturday, September 25th.

I met Ida Miller, to whom I think I gave her first permanent job, on *Woman* about thirty or more years ago, this morning in Sloane Square. She seemed to have changed little. She must be sixty at least, and is still in full work. She asked me if I saw Mrs. Goddard at all. Mrs. Goddard was on my staff before she was married, and I remember her husband, a lawyer's clerk, standing me a lunch so as to get me to agree to a furlough for her while she had a baby. She was very young and very beautiful. "She's a grandmother now," said Ida Miller. "Twice

SEPTEMBER

a grandmother young." I was as a young girl

Tuesday, September 21st.

I got out early and walked to H. Circus. Then I walked to H. Road, where I saw the Gallery, of which I had heard. I was still seeing no Gallery masterpiece. I was enabled me to

Wednesday, September 22nd.

We dined early. "The White debonair and the mess, was quite his character entirely out of sort of human

Michael M. said that "I everyone in prepared to Galsworthy's series of six if it succeeded Cats". He after an interview Morton believed things. Lion "I haven't a fine thing, and if I lose over I should have been absurd, I should say

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a grandmother. And just the same sweet nature, and just as young." I was staggered, because I had always thought of her as a young girl.

Tuesday, September 28th.

I got out earlier than usual with the intention of walking about till I found the ideas for the story of which I had the germ. I walked to Hyde Park Corner, and then by bus to Piccadilly Circus. Then up Shaftesbury Avenue and down Charing Cross Road, where I bought three books, and thence to the National Gallery, of which I saw that the re-arrangement had been proceeding still further. The N.G. is now very fine indeed. I've seen no Gallery equal to it. In some rooms every picture is a masterpiece. By this time I had got quite sufficient ideas to enable me to start the story.

Wednesday, September 29th.

We dined early and went to the first night of Alan Herbert's "The White Witch" at the Haymarket. Horace Watson very debonair and pleased in the foyer. The first act, despite longness, was quite amusing. Herbert had certainly lost all grip of his characters, nearly all of whom were constantly doing acts entirely out of keeping with their temperaments and with any sort of human nature. I was very disappointed indeed.

Michael Morton came by appointment to see me at 6.30. He said that "Riceyman Steps" had been refused by practically everyone in the West End, except Leon M. Lion. Lion was prepared to do it (as he was having a great success with Galsworthy's "Escape"); but he would only begin it by a series of six matinées, and he would get it into an evening bill if it succeeded at matinées. Lion instanced the case of "Tiger Cats". He gave four matinées of this and lost £900; then, after an interval, put it into the evening bill and made £5,000. Morton believes in him. He says he is sure he wants to do fine things. Lion has a brother in the City, who said to Morton: "I haven't read this 'Riceyman Steps' play, but I believe it's a fine thing, and I'll back it with my money, and I don't care if I lose over it." Lion is to play the miser. A month ago I should have said that the notion of Lion playing the miser was absurd, but after seeing him in Galsworthy's "Escape", I should say that he could play it very well indeed. Hilda

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Trevelyan = Mrs. Arb; Reginald Bach = Joe. I gave my consent to the scheme.

Monday, October 4th.

I was up at 6.15. I got into the streets about 10.10 and got back before 11, and finished my short story by noon. Then I did letters and organising, and walked up to the Reform Club for lunch, and was greeted by the brothers Sitwell in Pall Mall; they stopped their taxi in order to smile on their uncle. Lunched with Page, Roch, Hedges, Cecil Harmsworth, and Spender. Spender and I startled the table by our interest in clothes and tailors. Spender said that there was nothing between a really high-class tailor and the ready-made people. I agreed.

Sandwich Hotel, Ramsgate, Saturday, October 9th.

I corrected two articles and a short story, and went for a walk in the morning, and felt that I had had an idle morning. I read about 50 pages of Osbert Sitwell's first novel, "Before the Bombardment". It is inscribed to "dear, good, uncle Arnold from a nephew". Well, it is difficult to read. Very brilliant, or perhaps "rather" brilliant: but it doesn't seem to have much form, and much individual interest. The man *describes* characters instead of showing them.

Several more criticisms of "Raingo" yesterday. Better than I expected, for I had expected a bad press, as there is no really "lovable" or "pure" character in the book.

Sunday, October 10th.

Drove to Sandwich. A really antique feeling about this place. Streets such as Delf Street. Most curious the moment you begin really to think about it inquisitively. Happily a few barges get there still, up the stream, and seem to live in fields. All churches round here are closed on Sunday. We got into the one at Sandwich because some unfortunate children were imprisoned there for the afternoon service, but the fine church at Minster was closed; reminding me of my Sunday visit to Truro to see the monstrosity of a cathedral there: which was closed entirely.

Monday, October 11th.

We stopped in Harbour Street, at Hyland's and at Woolworth's.

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OCTOBER 4-OCTOBER 15, 1926

I had long been in need of a new cigarette-case (second) and I got one here for 6d. Dorothy received from me a pink pearl necklace with earrings to match, and 1 hat pin and 2 morocco (?) books to hold snap-shots of Virginia—the whole costing 8s. 6d. No wonder that this shop has a great fascination for the majority of human beings.

We hired a car and drove to Canterbury. I was rather overwhelmed by the size and the grandeur of the Cathedral. Unfortunately we got in while a service was going on. This service, as far as I heard it, was unaccompanied choral, with bursts of organ. I never heard any other words but 'Amen', and I must have heard this twenty or thirty times. The composer had made a speciality of sustained notes, and some of these were certainly droned for quite a minute at a time. The music seemed to me to be banal, but the singing good. The organ music played later was far more banal. As soon as the service was over, the people waiting to inspect the place were let loose, D. and I among them. Yes, I was much impressed. The choir is original (William of Sens). Stained glass often fine. Also the place is full of history. The town also is 'pullulating' with history and antiquity. We got home just after six.

75 Cadogan Square, Thursday, October 14th.

At 3.30 I was in the film world at Wardour Street, and I saw my titles for Part I of "Faust" roughly on the screen. T. told me that the Censor would not pass the word 'damned', and when in another place, I altered a phrase to "Show me woman in the flesh", he said that the censor would not pass that either. It is a great and fearful world the film-world. I drove home in a taxi. This is the first time I have taken a taxi either to or from the film world. I am getting fonder and fonder of motor-bus riding.

Friday, October 15th.

After a bad night, I began to write the story "Murder", and did 1,300 words before 12.30, and another 300 words in the afternoon. This was probably due to having an absolutely simple and clear plot, which I fashioned by myself and which is probably rather original. The idea of writing a story about a murder, however, came from Dorothy.

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Sunday, October 17th.

I printed the title page of the MS. of "Riceyman Steps". I have no longer the interest keen enough to do an elaborate title page; but for a simple one the title page I did was not too bad. Then, as Dorothy was in her boudoir writing for her life, it occurred to me I needed exercise and would go out for a walk. So I walked smartly to Westminster Cathedral, and sat therein for a quarter of an hour while the evening service began. I got back at 7.40 and began to write notes.

Monday, October 18th.

The first attack of neuralgia I've had since August 15, nine weeks' freedom. No wonder I have been able to work better and easier.

I finished reading "La prodigieuse vie d'Honoré de Balzac" by René Benjamin this morning. It is a very good book indeed. Strange that at the end he makes no reference to the (alleged) fact that Eve de Hanska's mother was in the house on the night of Balzac's death! I want this book to be translated into English. As regards "Lord Raingo", 35,000 copies have now been printed (three editions) and 18,450 had been sold up to the end of last week. That is to say, within ten days of publication.

Tuesday, October 19th.

I got a taxi in Portman Street and drove home and immediately wrote the last 400 words of my story "Murder". Then I boasted of this to Miss Nerney and walked and drove to the Reform Club for lunch—with Gardiner, Page, O'Brien, and Tudor Walters. Sachie Sitwell's book¹ came and I read a lot of it. Superb bricks out of ghastly straw. We didn't have much dinner as we were going to a supper party at the Lewises. Evening in Dorothy's bedroom reading. Arrived at 11.30. On arriving I was taken straight to talk to the Infanta of Spain. George Lewis was on the other side of her. I wondered whether I could leave her without outraging the *conte*; I stayed a long time while others were curtsying to her, etc.

Wednesday, October 20th.

No work to-day. I went out at 11 a.m. determined to "think

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up" an idea for a short novel, and I did gradually think of one. I went first of all to Charing Cross Road; but couldn't find any book that I really wanted to buy. I bought one or two little brochures on French and German painters, and a copy of the *Calendar* with a grotesque article by D. H. Lawrence in dispraise of Wells's "Clissold": a terrible revelation of Lawrence's childish and spiteful disposition.

Thursday, October 21st.

I began to read "Brunel's Tower" as a beginning for my essay on Phillpotts's novels for his limited edition.

The Wellses, the Robert Nicholsons, Geoffery Scott and Alec Shepeler came for dinner. This party went off admirably well and was a great lark. Wells is quieter than he used to be, and Nichols is even noisier than he used to be. There was a lot of argument between him and H. G. Wells in which H. G. was quiet and effective. Geoffery Scott is a very good talker, and very charming. He really has a brain, and isn't afraid to give its results to you at once.

Friday, October 22nd.

I began to get one or two (I think) real ideas for a short novel. I also finished reading Phillpotts's "Brunel's Tower", in the afternoon. It is done in the classical manner and tradition, but needs a relief of which there is no indication. I now have two others to read before I can write the introduction to the *édition de luxe* of his novels. It is interesting to find, in the copy of "Brunel's Tower" which he lent me to read, how he has perceived ten years after writing the book, that it was too long and might be cut with advantage. This copy is marked in red ink for the printer of the new edition, and I should say that a good 50 pages have been cut out of it: which here and there makes it rather awkward to read.

Dorothy and I dined alone, and at 9.30 'Lulu' Powys and wife (Alice Gregory) called to see us. Handsome fellow, in a pinky red shirt and necktie. I only found out after a time that she had been editor of *The Dial*. We asked them to dinner. All the Powyses that I have seen have almost exactly the same manner. They are enthusiastic in pleasure. When I praised Dreiser's "American Tragedy" three of them used exactly the same phrase with the same enthusiastic intonation. "Oh! I

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am glad. Dreiser *will* be honoured." Etc. But they are a highly brainy lot. We had a most interesting two hours of talk that was a bit more good than small talk.

Saturday, October 23rd.

I began to read Phillpotts's "The Whirlwind". It begins much better than "Brunel's Tower". A short walk. At 12.15 we drove down to Cherkley to lunch with Max.¹ Max asked me if I would write a weekly article on books under my own name for the *Evening Standard*. I didn't give a definite answer, but what I said and didn't say was not far short of a consent.

We were leaving about 5.10 when Mackenzie King, the Canadian Prime Minister, came in, for the week-end.

Sunday, October 24th.

I went out for a walk in bright sunshine a little before 11—down to the river, stared at the river, and returned, having heard congregational singing in a 'conventicle' *en route*. I visualised the inside of the conventicle and hated the thought of my youth. Then I read *Nature*, profitably.

Monday, October 25th.

I found that my article in yesterday's *Sunday Pictorial* on British weights and measures must have created quite a stir, for I received three letters about it from strangers by first post this morning. I expect they will have lots at the offices of the *S.P.*, and I hope to God they won't send them on to me. It is just this kind of an article which does interest the sort of mind that writes to the papers or to authors.

We dined at the Galsworthys': the Herberts and the Margaret Kennedy Davieses were there; and it was a thoroughly good evening. Left at about 11.25; it was then snowing. Indeed there was about an inch of snow on the trees; but it had all gone by the time we were half-way down Hampstead Road. John Galsworthy was very quiet. He talks, but talks more quietly than ever. He is now enjoying a greater success than ever—far greater, he is the idol of Germany, the United States, and England (and I expect that tends to quietude of demeanour).

¹ Lord Beaverbrook.

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OCTOBER 23-OCTOBER 30, 1926

Tuesday, October 26th.

Went to Tchekoff's "Three Sisters" at the Barnes Theatre. Well, I was bored frequently. Did I enjoy myself? No, not on the whole. Was I uplifted as I had been by an even gloomier play "Rosmersholm"? No. It seemed to me that often the author was wilfully pessimistic. He is certainly very monotonous, and all his plays that I've seen have the same tone. A decent Philistine man, sitting just behind us, said at the end of the second act that he had been disappointed and bored. But he liked Act III better, and Act IV still better. On the whole Tchekoff had succeeded with him. When I got home I found a great letter from H. G. Wells about (1) "Raingo", (2) Dorothy, (3) my "renewed" home, (4) my improved health. It was a fine letter.

Wednesday, October 27th.

At 6 o'clock Lewis Mannering came, to ask me to open the new establishment of Foyle the bookseller. He then asked me for a play for the Q Theatre, and then we talked about religion and books. He is a great collector of folk-lore books. He got 20,000, was bored, and sold "every leaf" and then he began again and has now reached 5 or 6,000. He is a firm rationalist. Not a bad sort. We had André Maurois, Ethel Sands, Jeanne de Casalis, Ruby Lindsay, Alfie Mason and Arthur Waley to dinner, and it was a very good party. Maurois showed extraordinary charm. He spoke once more about doing a French very free adaptation of "Milestones". I encouraged him. He said that he thought that "The Old Wives' Tale" was one of the finest works in English literature.

Thursday, October 28th.

I read half of Carl van Vechten's "Nigger Heaven". A short book. Quite good, and interesting in its exoticism. Yet I fear that when I finish it I shall say that there is nothing in it, really. It is very nicely done. This is true of a number of American books. The difference between Van Vechten and Theodore Dreiser! I turned out my light at 12.30.

Saturday, October 30th.

I began to think more seriously about the plan of my new novel.

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I had already got the moral background for it: the dissatisfaction of a successful and rich man with his own secret state of discontent and with the evils of the age. I wanted a frame. I walked about three miles this morning, and about a mile after tea, without getting a really satisfactory idea; then as I was lolling in my "easy" about 6.30, I suddenly thought that I would extend the rôle of the *train de luxe*, which I had thought of for the scene of the opening of the story, to be the scene of the whole of the novel—so that the entire time-space of the novel will only be about thirty hours or so.¹ I didn't go any farther than this; I had enough for the day. Then quite a lot of reading of Ludwig on the Kaiser. This seems to me to be rather a great book.

Tuesday, November 2nd.

Beaverbrook and Jean Norton came to lunch. I agreed with Max to do a series of book gossip articles for the *Evening Standard*, beginning next week. Then I rushed off to Wardour films, and spent a final 2¾ hours on "Faust", finishing it except for passing proofs of titles and choosing some types. Thorpe asked me to do their next film, "Carmen", and said I had done splendid work for them and been very patient. I said that I had lost money on "Faust", in the sense that I could have earned more by other work in the same time. True. But the advantage of doing titles is that they involve no brain-strain.

Wednesday, November 3rd.

Dorothy and I dined at home, and we went to the first night of Eden and Adelaide Phillpotts' new comedy "Yellow Sands". The first act was pretty good, but played nearly an hour. If half an hour had been cut out of it, the play would have *been* better and *gone* far better. I think it will be half a success. The mischief with it is that it is not dramatic. Every act stands almost still for about 90 per cent. of its time.

Thursday, November 4th.

I walked to the Savoy Hotel for the luncheon given to Osbert Sitwell prior to his departure for America. 60 people at this lunch. It was exceedingly well done. Birrell, aged 76, was in the chair, and as lively as a boy. He made two excellent, in-

¹ His novel "Accident".

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NOVEMBER 2-NOVEMBER 7, 1926

formal speeches. I got home at 4 p.m., and did oddments and had tea, and then went to bed for two hours 5.15 to 7.15. We were ten minutes late for dinner at H. G. Wells's, and H. G. himself was eleven minutes late. The Shaws were there, and Frank Wells, and Marjorie Craig (H. G.'s morning secretary) and the Leonard Woolfs. Both gloomy, these two last. But I liked both of them in spite of their naughty treatment of me in the press. Shaw talked practically the whole time, which is the same thing as saying that he talked a damn sight too much. After dinner he and Dorothy and Virginia Woolf and H. G. formed a group and never moved. I formed another group with Charlotte Shaw and Jane Wells, and never moved either. I really wanted to have a scrap with Virginia Woolf; but got no chance.

Saturday, November 6th.

I forgot to put down a thing I heard Edmund Gosse say at the Sitwell lunch on Thursday. He said, in reply to a remark: "Who is James Agate?" Considering that Agate is the dramatic critic on the *Sunday Times*, of which Gosse is the chief literary critic, and that they are both weekly contributors. . . . André Gide sent me one of 25 author's copies of "Le Journal des Faux Monnayeurs". This gave me the idea of keeping a journal of my next novel. I may do it. But I ought to have begun it a month ago.

We caught the 2.34 from Liverpool Street to Bishop's Stortford where we were met by Jane Wells and Frank, and driven to Easton Glebe,¹ where H. G. Wells received us. Mr. and Mrs. C. R. W. Nevins had already arrived.

Easton Glebe, near Dunmow, Sunday, November 7th.

A lovely, a heavenly morning; very clear and sunshiny. But very damp underfoot. I breakfasted with Jane Wells at 9.15 and then others came down. Then H. G. and I and D. went for a walk in Easton Park and the grounds of Easton Lodge, and saw a heron on the lake, and heard from H. G. a résumé of Lady Warwick's political life, wrong in certain details. We came back, and H. G. and I changed, and all six of us (without the Nevins) played ball games for 50 minutes. Fine lunch, with 3 ducks and a hot apple pie. After which, sleep, which enabled

¹ Residence of H. G. Wells.

me to miss the tennis. There was some tennis and some bridge and some Schubert trio on the gramophone, and some yacht talk, and some tea—with rose leaf jam. The day (outdoor) was now over, and all we had to live for was the fireworks postponed from wet yesterday evening. H. G. disappeared for about 90 minutes after tea. We thought he was reading or asleep. But at midnight he told us that he had suddenly had the ideas for continuing a novel that he hadn't touched for a month, and so had gone on with it.

There was not much intellectual activity about the day, but there was a feeling of latent activity.

75 Cadogan Square, Monday, November 8th.

The Wells's house soon emptied this morning. First Frank Wells went off in his Midget, then the Nevinsons went off in their 5-year-old Morris. And then we went off with H. G. and Jane in their Talbot, H. G. driving. He drives better than he used to do, but is still nervous, and cannot forbear from talking about his tactics. The drive as far as the South end of Epping Forest was delightful as regards autumn colour.

Saturday, November 13th.

Gale, rainy windy showers early. Rain all day till 8 o'clock.

I drove in driving rain to the Tate Gallery, in order to think over my novel, and saw some good English pictures. There are indeed some fine ones. The elder of the two Tate lecturers was very good on both Blake and Rossetti. He pointed out the humour in Rossetti's water-colours, and he very well explained their origin. Then I wrote some more notes for my novel—to be called, *pro tem.*, "Accident". Also I found names for two of the characters.

We drove, still in rain—or had the rain just stopped?—to the Lyceum for the first night of the Russian ballet. The whole high-brow and snob world was there, with a good sprinkling of decent people. The spectacle was good. I liked 'Petruschka' as much as ever, and "The House Party" more than ever. I begin now to understand the latter. It is all Sodom and Gomorrah. The "Swan Lake" had much applause: a fine old-fashioned example of Petipa's work. Orchestra better than usual.

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VOL. II

Sunday, November 14th.

I corrected my article on E. Phillpotts, for his limited edition. I think very little of this critical exercise: I hope it will help to sell the edition; but I doubt whether anything will overcome the general public objection to peasants in fiction. This was always strongly against Hardy's success too. If Phillpotts had dealt with the bourgeois, he would have been accepted as one of our leading psychologists. However, it doesn't matter, anyway he has made the public accept two bucolic comedies at once. Dorothy and I went out to meet Nurse and Virginia in the Park and we did meet them, punctually, and walked with them. Virginia was very wakeful and had a most mischievous, even dangerous look. There will be trouble with that child. Mrs. Belloc Lowndes, Dorothy Massingham, and the Bertie Powyses all came for tea and to behold the baby, and the baby behaved perfectly.

Monday, November 15th.

Duff Tayler and I lunched together and discussed his sick leg, and the future of the Lyric, Hammersmith. He had an idea for burlesquely producing one of the old melodramas, such as "Sweeney Todd". So we walked at once to French's and bought six old melodramas, of which we each took three. I drove home, slept, and read "Sweeney Todd" and half of "Black-eyed Susan". I decided "Sweeny" would do, but "B.E. Susan" would not. Elizabeth L. came to early dinner, and we took her to the first night of "The Would-be Gentleman" at the Lyric. This was rather less awful than I had feared: but it was pretty amateurish, and the recommendations of Duff and myself had not been carried out with any thoroughness. Anstey appeared, and looked charming, and aged, and naïf. He looked far younger at rehearsals. Dorothy did not care for the production; nor did Tertie; Elizabeth did; but Elizabeth is not discriminating.

Thursday, November 18th.

I was up earlier, and 'pushing on', so as to get a bit of thinking done on my novel, before I went to the rehearsal of "Riceyman Steps" at the Ambassadors Theatre at 11. But I couldn't clear up till 10.15. I meant to walk to the theatre; but it

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was raining hard, so I had to idle about and go by bus, and then I got to Cambridge Circus far too soon, and walked about 15 minutes, under the shelter of the Palace Theatre. I got some ideas however. I greeted Hilda Trevelyan at the theatre, and Morton introduced me to Gwen Ffrangcon-Davies and Frederick Cooper and others. The rehearsal started at 12 instead of 11—they were setting the "Steps" scene for the first time—and I soon saw that Gwen Davies was very clever and could give a performance of Elsie, and that Leon would give a very—perhaps too—elaborate portrait of Henry Earlforward. On the whole I was reassured.

Friday, November 19th.

We went on to the Gaiety Theatre to see "Just a Kiss". A rotten musical play, with a terrible chorus, and not enough music. Randalow, the chief singer and a fine singer, had only one song to sing. Happily he is also a fine actor (though untutored). It all seemed to me to be a bit sad. Generations of actors and actresses (in that same theatre, or in one on the same site) always talking and singing of love and fornication and kisses and drink, and always in a piffling childish way.

Saturday, November 20th.

Another day when rain prevented me from taking exercise. I taxied up to the Ambassadors Theatre for the rehearsal of Michael Morton's "Riceyman Steps", arriving at 10.40. We rehearsed until 3.5 p.m. and then ate a good snack of chicken, tongue, and salad, and admirable claret, in Leon M. Lion's dressing-room.

I got Leon to give up his terrific dying scene and to substitute a simple death; also to agree to Elsie and Joe being seen in the background at the end. He objected for a long time—"Believe me, my dear Bennett, I'm not thinking of myself and my part—I'm thinking only of the play", etc., etc., but gave in ultimately. Gwen Ffrangcon-Davies showed character, both as a woman and as an actress. There was nothing really remarkable about the rehearsal. Just the usual display on the part of nearly everyone concerned; the failure to exercise imagination—to realise that in certain circumstances people could never do what the producers were making them do.

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NOVEMBER 19-NOVEMBER 27, 1926

Tuesday, November 23rd.

Showery. Bleak. No rain later. Misty. Chilly evening. Chores in early morning. I wrote a letter to the *Daily Mail* in reply to Birkenhead's criticism of "Raingo" in that paper, and I signed it before I left home. After I left, the *Mail* telephoned that they would like an article at 2s. a word, as well as the letter. They said the letter was too good to lose. So, by telephone from the theatre, I agreed to both. I much enjoyed writing both the letter and the short article. I love a friendly scrap in the press.

Wednesday, November 24th.

Dress rehearsal of "Riceyman Steps" at Ambassadors Theatre. It actually begun at 10.45. Rather good. It ended at 2 o'clock, and was on the whole satisfactory. Athene Seyler cried. Nicholas Hannen was impressed. A stout middle-aged man spoke to me afterwards and said: "I don't know you, Mr. Bennett, but your play is most moving and impressive, etc." I said, "But I haven't written a line of it." He said it was all my material. I learnt afterwards that this was Horace Hodges, the actor. I wanted to be alone (with the *Manchester Guardian*) and so I went to Arthur's restaurant (Leicester Square). It was full, but I got a table after a moment. I then returned to the theatre and had speech with various persons and saw more bits of rehearsal, and then I slipped away and left everything to Michael Morton.

Thursday, November 25th.

Dorothy was at the 1st performance of "Riceyman Steps" at the Ambassadors Theatre. She arrived home shortly before 6, with a very gloomy account of it. Said that the miserliness was far too much *insisted* upon instead of being revealed, that the audience was chilled and not at all responsive; in short, that the thing was a failure. Which did not surprise me; though I think that Dorothy was perhaps a little over gloomy.

Friday, November 26th.

I began my novel "Accident" this morning at 11 o'clock.

Saturday, November 27th.

Two good days' work. Dorothy and I dined at home. After-

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wards came in Eric Kennington and Mrs. ditto, Arthur Waley and Alec Shepeler. Eric K. is very shy, but he is a delightful man. Eric brought Lawrence's £30 book "The Seven Pillars" to show me. It is not very good book-making; very *fine* illustrations in it, many of them coloured, and lots of lovely drawings by Roberts. But most of the illustrations are thoroughly out of place in the book and spoil the look of it. It seems that Lawrence has kept Kennington and Roberts, not to mention Wadsworth, pretty busy on it for several years.

Monday, November 29th.

I didn't finally wake up till 7.58, very rare occurrence, as I had had very few breaks during the night. *Daily Mail* article by Birkenhead on me, in which he practically accused me of lying.

I went downstairs and wrote my reply to Birkenhead in the form of a letter to the *Mail*. When I took it to Miss Nerney she said that the *Mail* had telephoned for an article: so I crossed out the Sir, and Yours truly, and called it an article and charged £60 for it.

Wednesday, December 1st.

When I opened the *Daily Mail* this morning I found that Birkenhead had made no further answer to me; so the incident is now, I suppose, closed. The press has been very generally in my favour. I had prepared some heavy artillery to kill him if he had continued the fight.

Mary Borden wrote an article in the *Standard* (as a retort to my criticisms of her) advising the young to take no notice of the work of H. G. Wells and myself. She is a clever woman, and was clever enough to ignore my criticisms of herself.

Thursday, December 2nd.

As I had not got my ideas clear for the next chapter of the novel, I went out for a walk after finishing correspondence and oddments, and walked to the XXI Gallery in Durham House Street, Strand. I found my ideas on the way all right. The XXI is a very dark gallery. Exhibition of Cosmo Clark's pictures of Black Country. I wasn't awfully pleased with them, but I bought one because I'd known Cosmo as a baby and was an old friend of his father's.

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I walked all the way to the Savoy Hotel for the dinner of the Other Club. Birkenhead came in, and we were very affable to one another, and everybody laughed about the just finished scrap between us in the *Daily Mail*. Afterwards he was most friendly and asked me to lunch with him alone. Reading was in the chair, and the dinner was the most agreeable that I remember of this Club. I sat next to Charles Masterman and opposite Alf Mason, and we had a great time. Afterwards I went and sat next to Jim Garvin. He talked exceedingly well, and is full of knowledge and ideas. Churchill and Jack Seely came in very late, long after dinner. Churchill said to me: "Receive the congratulations of Tom Hogarth" (over my row with Birkenhead). There was a great deal of "Raingo" throughout the evening.

Sunday, December 5th.

Walter Sickert and wife (Thérèse Lessore) and Cobb and Schuster and Wylde dined with us at the Royal York. Sickert (now aged 66) was in great form, especially towards the end of the dinner and later when we all came over to this hotel and sat in our sitting room. His wife was very quiet and dark and sweet, but far less quiet than when I sat next to her at dinner at Ethel Sands's a year or two ago. Sickert said some fine, sound things. He explained to us exactly why he liked Leader's pictures. But his pose is increasing of admiring the public as a judge of heart. I said that what he said was only half true, and he said, "Yes, but there is a great deal in it."

Monday, December 13th.

To the Hotel Cecil for the grand political Liberal Party dinner in honour of Vivian Phillipps, chief whip and organiser of the said Party. Earl Grey in the chair. It was quite lively at our table. Grey made a very good and really weighty speech of 45 minutes. The others, Phillipps, Runciman, Simon, Maclean and James Currie were all good, but in a class inferior to Grey. Grey very short sighted. Nearly all the white-haired politicians behaved as usual at these things, just like kids—pleased to death at the slightest 'hit', or comedy platitudes. Beaming all the time.

JOURNAL OF ARNOLD BENNETT

Sunday, December 19th.

I seemed to have forgotten all about my novel; but I had one gleam as to it in the middle of the night. Too much alcohol to-day. Stout, and a cocktail and Rhine wine in the evening. This is a great error of conduct, and I don't care what anyone says to the contrary. So there.

Monday, December 20th.

I swore to write 365,000 words this year, and to-day I have reached the number. But of course I shall write still more.

Thursday, December 23rd.

It took me a long time making trifling Xmas arrangements before I could begin to think at all about "Accident". Twice I started out for a reflection walk, and twice had to come back. Then down to the Reform Club, where I had 35 minutes to write down notes and have a glass of sherry before lunch. I had the necessary ideas by this time for the continuation of my chapter.

Saturday, December 25th.

This Xmas all right, though I did not have a good night before it. It was all organised by Dorothy, and she made it very successful. It was her first Christmas in charge of a household.

Monday, December 27th.

I read "Jew Suss", and am enjoying it more and more.¹ It gave colour and *height* to the ideas for my novel which I got during my walk.

Thursday, December 30th.

I went out for a preliminary walk at 10.30, about a mile and a half in Chelsea, and came back and wrote 500 words of "Accident". Then I did chores quickly and walked quickly to the Reform Club, and lunched in the sweet society of Tyler (barrister), A. G. Gardiner and Gardiner's son Gilbert, whom he had brought. Vivian Phillipps came later. Upstairs we talked about money, the comparative advantages of various careers, etc. In fact it

¹ It was Arnold Bennett's enthusiastic championship of "Jew Suss" that made it such a vast success in Great Britain.

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DECEMBER 19-DECEMBER 31, 1926

soon became all money, and I was sorry that young Gilbert Gardiner (still at Cambridge) should hear his elders in this sordid mood.

I calculate that I have now written more than a quarter of the novel.

Friday, December 31st.

I meant to have a good night last night in order to prepare for to-night, but I had a bad one. I went out for a longish walk (Oxford Circus, etc.) and got a few ideas for my first article for *Nash's Magazine*, but not really much. Lunch with Vivian Philipps. Then afterwards I stayed talking with Sassoon and E. M. Forster. The latter said that he had not begun a new novel, and hadn't got any ideas for one. So I cursed him and urged him to get on with a novel: but of course I knew it would be no good.

We gave a dinner for New Year's Eve at the Gargoyle, joining with the A. P. Herberts, who also had a party at one big table. Place full.

1927

Saturday, January 1st.

I wrote 378,100 words last year, having contracted with myself to write, at first 300,000, and then 365,000. I make no contract with myself for 1927. I published 28 articles during 1926 and, apparently, only four short stories. I know I wrote more than four—I should think seven, eight or ten.

Very feeble this morning, after the New Year's Eve carousing, and bed at 2.30. Towards noon I walked to South Kensington Museum to see the temporary exhibition of commercial printing and illustrations. I met D. S. McColl there. He told me that some time since Tonks had been 'very much bitten with the idea' of illustrating "The Old Wives' Tale". I never knew before. I remember that Sickert wanted to illustrate "Clayhanger".

I read more and more of "Jew Suss" (Feuchtwanger). Certainly the second half is not so good as the first. The artificiality of the convention becomes more apparent, or perhaps the author becomes more a victim of his conventions.

Monday, January 3rd.

Left at 10.45 p.m. and reached the Robert Mayers's, Cumberland Terrace, at 11 p.m. for a reception given by them to the members of the jury which decides what new works shall be produced at the International Music Festival. They are here (5 of them) for a week, and have to weed out 200 modern works. Arthur Bliss was there, and very lively; also Calvocoressi; also d'Aranyi, looking most distinguished. But the chief draw for me was Bernard van Dieren, whom I had never met. Apparently about forty: looks frail and good-humoured and a bit sardonic. A marvellous brain. He indulged in an argumentative scrap with Bliss, who also is very intelligent, and beat him hollow. I was obliged to tell them that I never could argue. I liked van Dieren very much; or rather I admired him very much.

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JANUARY 1-JANUARY 11, 1927

Wednesday, January 5th.

I bought "Treasure Island", as I had lately heard such praise of it. All I remember of my first reading of it, many years ago, is that I liked it. I read a lot of it this afternoon, and all I can say is that I thought it wasn't so bad.

Friday, January 7th.

Set off to walk to the Royal Academy for the Belgian-Flemish picture show, calling on the way to look at a book-shop. A growing crowd at the R.A. The Belgian masters are magnificent, but none of them—not even Rubens—ranks with the biggest Italians, Memling, van Eyck, and Breughel are the best. I was sitting in front of the Breughels when Laurence Binyon came up and said: "Don't you think Breughel is the finest painter in the world?" He isn't, but I was very pleased, because I've been saying this ever since I saw the small Breughel seascapes and things in Rome. Then I went, Dorothy with me, to the Capitol to see the "Cinderella" film, of which I had heard very high praise. It lacks invention; but much of the photography was exceedingly fine. The melancholy of the thought that the organist is playing the organ all day. Began my preface for Agate's new book of dramatic criticism, and wrote 600 words.

Monday, January 10th.

The Crosby Gaiges came for tea. I took Gaige into my study and showed him some MSS. and other things. He asked me whether I ever thought of selling my MSS. He said that if I ever did, he would like to have the offer of them. I said they would be very dear. He said he might be in funds. I found the MS. (bound) of "The Muscovy Ducks" among a lot of Staffordshire books, where it certainly ought not to have been. So I gave it to him.

After discussing it with D. I decided to make over to her all the rights in all my performed plays—reserving those not performed. And when we got home at about 10.40 I at once wrote a letter to Geoffrey Russell on this great subject, giving instructions and asking advice.

Tuesday, January 11th.

I walked to the Carlton Hotel to meet Colonel Fitzhugh Min-

negero, Leader representative of the Magazine Section of the *New York Times*. Minnegerode had been twenty years in the American army, and had lost the greater part of his regiment at Verdun. He told me the funniest story I have ever heard about a writer. At d'Annunzio's place, somewhere in the north of Italy, the servants have the strictest orders when they meet the master in or about the house, to drop instantly whatever they may be carrying, and to put one hand and forearm over the other. Whatever it is—a tea-tray with glasses, *e.g.*, must be dropped on the floor. So that now the servants have instituted a private 'heralding' system. A man carrying anything is preceded by another, and if the former meets the master he crosses his arms, and the latter gets quickly out of the way. Minnegerode said also that in the architecture somewhere there is an unfinished column, and d'Annunzio says that that column will be finished after Ireland is completely free.

Friday, January 14th.

I read a lot of Villard's book on great American journalists. It is not very well done, and the editor of the N.Y. Notes ought to be able to write better than he does. I expected more from this book.

Sunday, January 16th.

Bernard van Dieren came for tea. He stayed two hours: talking about 75 per cent. of the time. He is a very fine talker, but he drones or chants, and his command of English, though marvellous, is that of a foreigner. He told us he had lived in London for twenty years. He is one of the most cultured men I ever met, and seemed very good in all the arts, and in at least 4 languages. He really came to consult me about the book of an opera he is writing on the subject of Caesar Borgia.

Monday, January 17th.

Walk, after chores. It was thick fog at 7.30. Then it cleared a bit, but was still foggy. Then just as I was going out at 10.5, it began to rain. However, I went out and walked to South Kensington Museum and looked at a few good things to buck me up, including my favourite early 15th-century Virgin and Child and then walked home again. More chores, and then I went up by bus to the Carlton Grill to be the guest of Colonel Minnegerode.

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JANUARY 14-JANUARY 25, 1927

Hotel Tyrol, Innsbruck, Saturday, January 22nd.

Eventless journey. I talked with the Wagons-Lits conductor of our coach. He said that conductors depended solely on tips. He said it was all right when the train was full, but not otherwise. He said that 50 francs was a fine tip. People gave 30 and 20; even 10 and even 5. He said Americans demanded the most attention and gave the smallest tips. He had an idea that tips were not given in America.

We had breakfast and lunch on the train, in monotonous snow-laden landscapes with black rivers running through them, and tree-covered steep hill sides. A few ski-ers. Small villages.

Hotel Savoy, Cortina, Sunday, January 23rd.

We left Innsbruck in snow at 7.10. We reached Cortina at 8.40. Thick snow at Cortina. I had telegraphed to the Savoy that we couldn't arrive till Monday, but later, when the special had been altered, I telegraphed we should arrive. But the second telegram never reached Cortina. So that instead of a suite of three rooms and bathroom we had only one room and no bathroom. We were deprived of our sitting-room owing to all sorts of changes forcibly made in the hotel on account of the imminent visit of the Duke of Genoa, who wanted twelve rooms and could not be refused.

Monday, January 24th.

Magnificent morning. Pinkish, salmonish Dolomite peaks, grey rocks, white snow, blue sky, strong sunshine. The air is undoubtedly very tonic at this height, 4,200 ft.

The Aldous Huxleys called on us. We talked with them for some time and then they took us to their house for tea, where several other people arrived.

Tuesday, January 25th.

First full, empty day of holiday. We met Aldous and Maria Huxley, who had been ski-ing. I stood about till I could risk the cold no longer, and then went for a walk, breaking often into a run. By this time (4 p.m.) all the tracks round here were in shadow. The Aldous Huxleys came for dinner and stayed till 11.55.

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Wednesday, January 26th.

The Duke of Genoa, with his two sons, Dukes of Padua and Pistoia, had arrived, with certain ladies. The ducal party had a table in a corner of the restaurant, and were waited upon by the head waiter from the bar-room. They then sat in the ball-room, the National Anthem or something being played at their entrance therein, and the young dukes danced a bit, one of them with a hotel visitor. They seemed bored. The Duke of Genoa is very old, with a hatchet, sharp face, and he seems to chew all his food, at great length, with his front teeth. Gives the appearance of a rat eating at a piece of wood. But apparently a decent fellow.

Thursday, January 27th.

I began to have vague ideas about work to-day, partly due no doubt to Aldous Huxley's remark that he always began to pine away after only a few days of complete holiday from work.

At 3 p.m. we set off to see the finish of the bob-sleigh match. Nothing much to see at the end of the 'Pista da Bob', except the ducal party standing and sitting on a rough platform of boards. At intervals a 'bob' swept round the corner and drew up past the winning post, where men sat at a table in the sharp frost writing down times and numbers in a book. The skiing practice of village boys on a neighbouring slope was much more amusing. Fortunately this spot was close to the Huxley's cottage. We were bidden there for tea, and arrived before 4, and played make-believes with the two kids and Matthew's mother.

I read another 70 or 80 pages of Olive Schreiner's "From Man to Man"; which is still missing the first-rate.

Friday, January 28th.

I went off to catch the funicular up to the Belvedere on a hill 1,000 feet higher than Cortina. We call it a funicular, but it isn't one. The carriage swings on a wire over the tree-tops etc. All the other passengers were ski-ers. The sensation of floating over the snowy slopes, and seeing fir-trees from the top is rather amusing. The *trajet* takes only ten minutes.

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Saturday, January 29th.

I had an idea for writing a series of *souvenirs d'enfance*. There is nothing about *souvenirs d'enfance* in Louis Aragon's "Paysan de Paris", but this book is certainly stimulating me into a fresh creativeness. I must say that, though it is uneven, I should like to write a book like that—I mean about London. Only of course England would never tolerate the *belle franchise* of this French book. While Dorothy was dressing I went out for a walk. I wanted to be alone to think about a short story and about two articles and about my dimly projected *souvenirs*, but I came across Baroness Franchetti, acquaintance of the Huxleys. She would walk with me. And when I said I must turn she said she also must turn back. Then she took my photograph twice in the middle of the road, blazing sunshine screwing up eyes, etc. However, she did tell me one interesting thing. She knew Ibsen. She said she spent a whole season in the same hotel with him and his family somewhere. She sat at the next table to the Ibsens. They—father, mother, and boy—never spoke a word during the whole time. Ibsen (said Mdme. Franchetti) would talk freely to Madame Franchetti afterwards. He told her that he wrote all his work four times. Also that he wrote "The Doll's House" in the open air, in tremendous sunshine, at Sorrento. He loved the greatest possible heat to work in.

Sunday, January 30th.

Disappointed at seeing no rosy sunrise effects on the peak opposite my window. We arrived with D.'s skis, and a hotel lunch for two in a paper bag, at the Teleferica station,—the rendezvous with the Aldous Huxleys. They were there first. We discussed some time whether or not we should go to the top, as the peaks were already wreathed in clouds. But of course in the end we decided to go. And we were glad we did go. We ate our lunches in the restaurant of the little hotel at the top, and had soup and wine therewith. Also coffee. And everything was very good. Then the three ski-ers set off for the descent at 1.50, and I set off to walk down by the main road (which road I had failed to discover two days ago). It had begun to snow at 1 o'clock, and it was now snowing pretty thickly. I passed a middle-aged native with a spade, as drunk

as anything. He reeled from side to side of the precipice-bounded path, and fell down once on his stomach. As I couldn't do anything I cheerfully left him. At the bridge where the ski-path crosses the road, no sign of the ski-ers. The whole mountainous landscape on every side is obscured by clouds. Snow ceased for a bit at 4 o'clock.

Dorothy got back at about 5.15. Maria brought her. They both said that the ski-ing down the mountain in the falling snow had been a very disagreeable experience. They all fell all the time, and Aldous H. had one severe fall.

Wednesday, February 2nd.

I was wakened at 5 by the Convent Hospital bell—a fearsome clangour. At 5.40 my day had begun, and although tired I felt rather jolly about starting so early. By 9 o'clock, or perhaps earlier, I had written the third section of my short story—over 1,000 words. I went out at 10.30 so as to change my skates, which were too small for my new large uncomfortable boots. The demoiselle at the shop was most agreeable; she came to me almost at once, and gave me size 28 instead of 27, and I departed, content, except that I had no desire whatever to skate.

Thursday, February 3rd.

Il Principe Ereditario [of Italy] arrived about 11 this morning. Band and popular applause. Plenty of people in the street. Peasant girls staring at the hotel long after the Prince had definitely disappeared within. To-night the village is illuminated, and you can see illuminations far up the hillside. The church tower, quite lofty, is illuminated with quiet and effective taste. Secretaries or underlings of some sort, from one to six of them, are continuously standing on the first-floor landing in front of the Crown Prince's suite. You might almost think that he was more important than Mussolini, and that his uncles and cousins are as naught in comparison with him.

We sleighed to Huxleys' to dinner and back, and it was very cold, with marvellous stars. When we got back at 11.20 the hotel was in full swing. Ballroom crowded and the hall turned into a *vestiaire*. Crown Prince, in uniform, dancing with various women.

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Saturday, February 5th.

To-day at last we made our excursion up to Tre Croci. A magnificent day. We took a 2-horse sleigh and the professor of ski-ing, and picked up the Huxleys at the Hotel Belleoni. Tre Croci is 600 metres higher than Cortina. As you rise, the sky seems to get bluer and the air clearer, and the craggy reddish mountains more grand. The beauty of the severe landscapes, and the quality of the air were exhilarating to the point of intoxication sometimes. All the way up—8 kilometres—the road was patrolled by gendarmes at a distance of about 200 yards apart, because the Crown Prince was going up there to lunch. Strange, to think of all those gendarmes standing nearly all day in the cold (only a few of them had boards to stand on—and remember it was freezing hard), well uniformed, barbered, cleaned, with wives and children probably—all so that the Crown Prince should see them as he drove up in his sleigh. We took lunch with us—against my advice—and a good thing we did, for the big hotel at the top was all sixes and sevens with excitement and preparations about and for the Prince. We had difficulty in getting cocktails. The head waiter was not polite. After the cocktails we took our food out into the open and ate in the sunshine. Rather messy, and my hands were soon very cold; but we enjoyed it.

The ski-ers started, under guidance of the Professor, and I and Peter (Huxley's dog) kept near them in the sleigh. We met every now and then, and I saw several fine runs and several falls. Dorothy was doing very well. They were all enjoying themselves enormously. I got home first. Dorothy said it was the finest day she had ever had in all her life. Certainly a most marvellous day, even for me, with air, sunshine, superb landscapes, and a universal clarity. A Spanish costume ball at night, but only about two Spanish costumes and Dorothy's Spanish shawl.

Sunday, February 6th.

Didn't get out till 11.30 and we had lunch at noon, in order to go to the International Ski-jumping Contest, two miles off. We took the Huxleys. Frost, overcast. We drove there in a small sleigh, but had to walk at the end up hill about half a mile to get to our *tribune*, upon which we got excellent seats.

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The tribunes are built on poles down the 45° snow slopes of the jump. The Scandinavians were best and the Italians the worst, but there were exceptions. The first jump gives you a great thrill, but you soon get used to it, when you perceive that the chances of a serious accident are trifling. The swiftest of them you can hear hurtling through the air. I tried to watch the faces of the competitors as they flew past us and above me. On the whole they seemed fairly calm and set.

I read *The Times Lit. Suppl.* article on "Re-reading Walter Pater", and found in it no reason why I should re-read W. Pater. Huxley agrees with me on Pater.

Monday, February 7th.

Great feeling of health and energy this morning. I walked up the hill about twice as high as the Hotel Cristallo, and walked down again because I could not find a circular tour. Lonely bare larch woods up there, and the forlorn spectacle of a hotel shut up for the winter. The views of the opposite mountains are very fine, but you can't look at them unless you stand still in the cold. Going up you have your back to them, and coming down you have to look where you are putting your feet—every step.

I found from my *Evening Standards* that my last week's article referring to young imaginative authors, had aroused the usual opposition. J. Drinkwater, Mrs. Lowndes, C. S. Evans, all defending the young. They don't see what a lark and what a desirable thing it is to give the young a flick now and then. No one has supported the young more violently than I have.

Wednesday, February 9th.

To-day I read in the *Continental Daily Mail* that George Sturt¹ was dead. This death produced no effect of sadness on me at all. George had been ill and half-paralysed for many years, and I don't think I had seen him at all for about sixteen years. When I did see him I drove down to Farnham, and he asked me to keep my car and chauffeur out of the way lest it should constrain or frighten or embarrass, or something, his household. And I had to eat at the inn. I understood all this perfectly

¹ An old friend. See Vol. I, p. 22.

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well, however, and I had about a couple of hours' fine time with him, chiefly in his garden. His later books, so far as I read them, were not as good as his earlier. I remember that when I started to keep a journal—it must be over thirty years ago—I made up and bound (in cardboard, etc.) the volumes myself. (I had them bound in calf later.) I showed the first volume, scarcely written in, to George. George said: "If you'll bind me a volume like that, I'll keep a journal too." So I did. Afterwards he kept on keeping a journal, but in large volumes. I think that he had made notes before, but he had never kept a journal. Of course all these notes and journals were the material of his books in a quite exceptional degree.

Thursday, February 10th.

I have now read positively as much as I shall read of Fleuret's "Histoire de la Bienheureuse Fille Raton". It contains a good idea—that of professional fornication for the love of God—and some excellent scenes. But it is not *quite* good enough, and much of its attraction depends on its extreme licentiousness. Indeed, you can see the author passing on from scene to scene, each exceeding the previous one in licentiousness, exactly in the manner of a merely bawdy book. I did not read by any means all the middle part of it. Still it is a book to examine.

I saw by chance in the *Nation* a wonderful description of a thunder and hailstorm at a popular resort on a mountain top, by D. H. Lawrence. He can do it sometimes. In fact he can d——d well do it sometimes.

Friday, February 11th.

Huxley told me a story of Wellington. When Wellington was asked, apropos of the mistakes of military commanders, what was the worst order he had ever heard of as being given by a G.O.C., he said it was: "Soldiers, remember that you are Portuguese."

I am enjoying de Castellane's "Comment j'ai découvert l'Amérique" but there are parts that I skip, and a good deal of the book, I think, would hardly have been written by a man of nice taste. On the whole the French books I bought in Paris have panned out pretty well.

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Saturday, February 12th.

I want to write one more article for the *Evening Standard* before we leave here; but I don't seem to be able to get any leading idea for it, except that of slating one or two of my young friends, such as William Gerhardt. I read a lot more of Castellane's "Memoirs". There are still very good things in it, though some pages are tedious and even absurd. And all the criticisms of his wife are a mistake. After all, he lived with her for twelve years, and had two children by her. When you have done that you ought to leave a woman alone.

Sunday, February 13th.

Idle in the grand manner to-day. The Huxleys came for lunch shortly after 1 o'clock, and we had a very good lunch, and I drank beer, and it did me no harm. This is the first time I have drunk beer without suffering for it for about eighteen years. The last time I drank it was at a restaurant at or near Baia; it made me ill instantly. The time before that was about sixteen or seventeen or eighteen years ago in a café in the *place* where are the theatres Sarah Bernhardt and Porte St. Martin, after seeing Sarah Bernhardt in some rotten play; it made me quite ill for twenty-four hours.

But I was forgetting. I wasn't completely idle. I corrected the last three-quarters of the proofs of my 20,000-word short story "The Woman Who Stole Everything". I thought this story one of the best I had ever done. I was so full of this idea that I wrote to Miss Nerney about it, and talked at some length with Dorothy about it, and wrote to Newman Flower about a special jacket for the book: which is to come out this Spring.

Dorothy is planning to come here again next winter, with a larger party. But I don't think that this will happen. She won't be able to get a larger party—perhaps no party at all.

Interesting people aren't free. They have their own plans. However—the queer thing is that I simply don't mind where I go for a holiday—if there is a really good hotel on the spot. I can amuse myself and pass the time agreeably anywhere.

Monday, February 14th.

We drove off to the Huxleys to dine, promptly at 8.

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Aldous Huxley is getting more and more into the habit of using such words as 'inconceivable', 'incredible', 'fantastic'. These three are his favourite words, and one of them comes into nearly every sentence. His general knowledge is extraordinarily good. In fact it is inconceivable, incredible and fantastic.

Tuesday, February 15th.

After dinner paid the bill and the concierge and made all arrangements for breakfast and departure to-morrow morning. It seemed to threaten snow all day but none fell.

Hotel Ruhl, Nice, Saturday, February 19th.

I read a lot of the book Robert Nichols specially recommended to me. "Neighbours", by Claude Houghton. I think there may be an idea in it, but up to page 100 it is very amateurish. I have also read three acts of "Troilus and Cressida". It is great stuff, as regards character and language and 'closeness' of texture; and yet it takes the fellow nearly three acts to come to the real point of the plot.

Sunday, February 20th.

I corrected proofs of the opening chapters of the "Vanguard" before dinner last night, and thought them very good—brilliant.

Tuesday, February 22nd.

We were due at H. G. Wells's, Quartier St. Mathieu, Grasse, for lunch. It soon began to rain. Nevertheless the continuously mounting drive to Grasse was very beautiful. Little seems to have changed in that region in the last five years. Nor at Grasse either. The rendezvous with H. G. was for noon in the *Cours* at Grasse. We arrived precisely at twelve, and he was there, signalling, in a big doggy overcoat with the collar turned up, in the rain. Plenty of mud. We left our car and got into his Citroën. Drive of about ten minutes, narrow curving, up and down, thoroughly bad little road. He has the *dépendance* of a larger house, but is building a house of his own on the opposite side of a little valley. Odette Keun came rapidly downstairs to greet us. She enveloped us in welcome. The 'feminine touch' all over the place. Excellent lunch, Provençale, with appreciable garlic in it. An original lunch. We went over

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to see the new house in process of construction. Well, H. G. designed it himself and got an architect to 're-draw the plans'. What he would call a jolly little house. But it wouldn't suit me. Rooms too small, and windows too large, and no tradition behind the design. Still the open-air rooms will be very 'jolly' for eating and sitting about in. Much charm in the situation. We greatly enjoyed this visit. It was very invigorating in every way.

Hotel Bristol, Paris, Thursday, February 24th.

We walked along the Rue du Faubourg St. Honoré. Lovely shops. Beautifully arranged. Marvellously arranged. This fact strikes me more and more. You may wander afar off to see old quaint quarters of Paris; but they are not more artistic than these modern shops in the middle of the much-despised modern shopping Anglo-American quarter. Well, we went into Hermes, and were very well served by a young man, and we bought a handbag for Dorothy, price 1,000 frs. D. didn't want me to pay so much, but this bag really affected my feelings.

I read in Paul Morand's "Rien que la Terre". This book does not seem to me to be anything very remarkable—at best you can call it remarkably bright, variegated journalism. This is the last of the six French books which I bought in Paris on the day we left for Cortina. I have now read or sampled them all. The best is certainly Aragon's "Paysan de Paris". I gave it to the Aldous Huxleys. De Castellane's "Comment j'ai découvert l'Amérique" is very interesting and alive for the most part, and contains a few rather profound things. But on the whole I haven't read anything really very startling since we left England. I doubt whether I am in fact very fond of reading. I always *look forward* to reading. But the realisation is less satisfactory. I soon tire of it.

Monday, February 28th.

Lunch at the André Maurois' at Neuilly, and met Madame Maurois. Present also: Mimi and husband, Jouvét (director of the Comédie des Champs Elysées) and the Comte and Comtesse Guy de Pourtalès (he being the author of the new life of Liszt). He is a hearty, bright fellow. Both Dorothy and I were very pleased with Jouvét, but had no opportunity to talk to him. Maurois took me aside, and told me formally that

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FEBRUARY 24-MARCH 2, 1927

he wished to adapt "Milestones" for the French stage, and I informally gave him permission and told him that he could have a free hand to alter it as he thought best. The Pourtalès drove us back to the hotel.

We dined at the Cheval Pie and then walked to the "Studio des Champs Elysées" for a rendezvous with the Maurois and Maurice Baring, who had come over in the afternoon, to see 'Maya'. We had the private directorial box, and it was very hot and hard, with a very side view. The play is drawing all Paris, because it is about the life of *grues* at Marseilles. It is very dull, and artistically is not a bit better than "Le Souris d'hôtel" that we saw the other evening at the Edouard VII.

Tuesday, March 1st.

I got up at 6, to write this and do oddments, and I shall now go to bed again. I read a good bit of 'Si le grain ne meurt' in the night. The *souvenirs d'enfance* are beautifully done. I am liking this book, of which Gide has sent me a copy of the special *tirage* (50 copies) of the *nouvelle édition*. Certainly I have learnt a little about the newest French literature since I left England. Gide said yesterday that he should speak to Gaston Gallimard to find out why the *N.R.F.* was so silly as to begin the French translations of my works with "The Ghost".

Wednesday, March 2nd.

I did nothing else all morning, except take a short stroll to the Champs Elysées and back. The André Maurois and Maurice Baring came to lunch at the hotel. They stayed till just 3 o'clock.

Walked up the Avenue Victor Emanuel III searching for stuffs and for a writing desk for Dorothy. The stuffs were still dearer in this street than in the Rue du F. St. Honoré. The writing desks averaged £60 to £70! I noticed that, though guaranteed *de l'époque*, they were all splashed with ink to make them still more *de l'époque*.

Alfred Savoir "Passy 22-85" play at the Potinière. A *childish* thing, as I knew it would be. All these fashionable things *are* childish. But Charlotte Lyses was admirable in it. B. and a party were there. But they prudently left after the second act. We left just before the end of the play.

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Thursday, March 3rd.

I drove down to the Institut de France along the quays, and then walked slowly back as far as the Rue du Bac, looking at the book-boxes. I only bought one book, "Les Moments Perdus de John Shag" by Gilbert de Voisins, which Gide had specially recommended me. It was marked "*Service de la Presse*", 8 frs. instead of 12, and its transparent paper envelope had not been violated at all. There were a few other books I might have bought, but I didn't want to carry them, or I knew I shouldn't read them or something.

I then walked on to the Restaurant Lucas, where Maurice Baring gave a very good lunch to Dorothy and me and a Russian exile named Dimitrieff Momonoff, a sharp-nosed man with a good grey beard, speaking good English. Unfortunately he had not been reading the new Russian authors, except Leonid Leonov, whom he specially recommended to me. He said that "The Death of Simon Fuge" was in the Tchekoff style, though probably written before I had read Tchekoff. There is something in this. Maurice said I had never written the sort of plays I ought to write and could write. Something in this, too.

We entertained the whole five Godebski-Blaque Bellair crew to dinner. We had a most agreeable and chattering evening. Dorothy was at bottom very exhausted, yet she plotted with the others to force me to go to the Grand Écart on Friday night, and stay till 1 or 2 in the morning. Her dressmaking business is now fairly well concluded—or rather she thinks it is.

Friday, March 4th.

Tea at the Café de Madrid. All around there the *grand boulevard est très changé*—I mean where the Boulevard Haussmann now begins. I looked for the Taverne Pousset. It had gone. Great concourses of people. Vulgar shops. D. had insisted on going to the Grand Écart afterwards, the momentarily fashionable night-café of Montmartre (Rue Fromentin). We all four went. The Grand Écart is *bien fréquenté*, but terrible. Met Léon Paul Fargue, who was nearly bald, but otherwise little changed. After much trouble we got away about 1.15, having been terribly bored nearly all the time, and both of us dropping with exhaustion. Before 2 a.m., just as she was ready to go off to sleep, Dorothy began to admit how stupid she had been in insisting on going to this blasted café and how repentant she

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was. I read a lot more of "Si le grain ne meurt". Fargue said he thought it is Gide's best book. I think so too.

Saturday, March 5th.

Dorothy wanted to see Gerald's new play "Son Mari" ("only one act or at most two"). Happily no seats obtainable. So we got two for the Variétés ("L'Habit Vert de Flers" and "Caillavet"). Now Dorothy thought that she had been asking the theatre-man here for seats for 'Variétés', the German Jannings film—known as 'Vaudeville' in England. It was not till we were driving along the boulevard that she discovered that she had misled two men, the theatre-man and me, as to what she really wanted.

75 Cadogan Square, Monday, March 7th.

We went to lunch at Sybil Colefax's. Others present: a Lady Pike, Francis Toye, Princess Bibesco, a diplomat, a partner in Eyre and Spottiswood's, who had a few interesting things to say about Macaulay, and Tallulah Bankhead. I sat between her and Sybil. I warned her against smoking at meals, etc. A decent, ignorant little thing—who can act.

I read the sketch of Einstein's theory in Sullivan's "Aspects of Science". It is not clear to me, but it is the least obscure description of the theory that I have yet seen. Sullivan has quite an exceptional mind—scientific and artistic at once. He has real, fundamental, scientific conceptions, and is extremely interesting. Virginia has struck us as quite grown up. She is very active. Dorothy says she is plainer than she was; but I can't see this myself.

Tuesday, March 8th.

The Edgar Selwyns came to lunch. We talked chiefly about the proposed play on "Lord Raingo". His ideas for it still seemed to me to be very good. He talked of the casting. Said he wanted George Arliss . . . just as if the play was all ready for production! He said that Arliss seldom played to less than 20,000 dollars a week. Also that Arliss was almost the only star who would go "on the road".

Wednesday, March 9th.

This morning before noon I finished reading what I had done of

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"Accident" and I decidedly liked it. It seemed to me to be sound and interesting; of course old-fashioned—at least I suppose so.

Then I walked up to the Reform, and got there early. I lunched with Page, Gardiner, Roch and two others. Discussion of Churchill's book. Everyone praised it as a *tour de force*, but said it was by no means always honest, and certainly wasn't history, inasmuch as it was obviously written to prove that Churchill had been right throughout the war. Personally, I think it is a bit better than that. I regard it as a remarkable achievement. I came home by bus and slept. I felt gloomy. I hadn't really begun to get my ideas into order for proceeding with my novel.

Then I read the newest fiction. Priestley's "Adam in Moonshine" and Romer Wilson's "Latter-Day Symphony", and I at once wrote paragraphs about them to go into a future *Standard* article. Poor and pretentious stuff, I thought. Nothing original in them. But Elizabeth Madox Roberts's "The Time of Man" (American—sent to me by Doran) seems to me to be pretty good authentic fiction. A very different affair from the other two.

Thursday, March 10th.

Went to the dinner of the Other Club at the Savoy. It was a small but a particularly good meeting. I had Ned Lutyens on my left and Archie Sinclair on my right, and Churchill opposite me during the last and best part of the evening. I referred to Charlie Masterman's criticism of his rhetorical style, and in particular of the phrase about pistols drinking blood. Churchill at once said: "What about taking arms against a sea of troubles?" He said that when he wrote that phrase he had pistols actually by him (for some reason which I forget).

Friday, March 11th.

First thing after breakfast and seeing Dorothy I wrote a little article about Westminster Cathedral for the *Oxford and Cambridge* (illustrated weekly). I took the material from notes made on a visit. I've got a lot of these notes made within about twelve months. I shouldn't ever have written the article without the notes. Moral. Unhappily I do this article gratis.

¹ "The World Crisis, 1916-18."

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Then I went out for a walk along King's Road and round about Holbein Place (second-hand shops) to get my "Accident" ideas into order. Succeeded. Sat down and began to write at once, 500 words by 1 p.m. Tea with Dorothy. Then a bit more of the novel. I found I had written 1,200 words of the same by 7 p.m. Quite excellent for the first day of a resumption after 7 weeks' intermission. I spent a bit of time in miscellaneous reading. The Colefaxes, Alick Shepeler and Otto Kahn and Rudolf Kommer came for dinner. Kahn came through Kommer. Kahn wanted a nice bunch for his yachting cruise in the Greek Archipelago, and Kommer, who is very friendly with him, suggested me as one. Kahn is short and white and sturdy. Of course very assured in style. Stuffed with brains. Highly intelligent. Phrases his talk very well. I at once decided to sail with him. April 20th for a month. Kahn was never uninteresting, he gave a great deal of his attention to Dorothy. You can see he is efficient in everything. His information-giving talk with me about the projected cruise was excellently terse—couldn't have been better.

Saturday, March 12th.

We lunched with Beaverbrook at the Vineyard. He wanted various opinions on things from me, and some special information about a journalist. The Marchioness Curzon and Scatters Wilson were there. After lunch, both Lady Curzon and her daughter telephoned to Max. Max showed me a detail alternative plan for his new yacht, and we all lay on the floor of his wretched little drawing-room to study them. He was most benevolent and charming, and flattering about my "Books and Persons". He showed me two specimens of proposed publicity for Ethel M. Dell's serial in the *Evening Standard*, which I should have phrased very differently. I got him to alter one bit.

Sunday, March 13th.

I went out for a walk, along the Embankment past the old Clock House (now turned into flats and looking damned odd—what a change, only a year or two ago I met at dinner the woman who lived in Clock House all by herself), and past Oakley Street into Cheyne Row and past Carlyle's gloomy house, which I hadn't seen for a long time, and home by 12 o'clock. Whereupon, having got my ideas into order, I at once sat down

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and wrote 800 words of "Accident". Lunch at home with Dorothy.

At night I resumed Sinclair Lewis's new novel.¹ At 3.25 we went forth by a 11 bus to the National Gallery, and saw a few fine things again, and the Hubert van Eyck thing that was in the Flemish Exhibition at the R.A. Good, but not, to my mind, in the same place as John van Eyck which is hanging close by. D. showed me a portrait of a man by (I forget—Italian, 15 cent.), and said that for her it was the finest portrait in the world. It was very fine, but perhaps she was as much attracted by the subject as by the painting.

We dined alone together, and then we played four-hand bits out of the "Meistersinger".

Monday, March 14th.

Lunch with Richmond Temple in a private room at the Savoy. I had asked him to the Reform, but he suggested the Savoy because we should be quieter. I wanted to get from Temple a few general ideas about hotel management here and on the Continent, so that I could decide whether it would be practicable, artistically or otherwise, for me to write a 'big' novel with a hotel organism, or two hotel organisms, as environment, and probably a hotel manager as hero. Temple has imagination and he abounds in general ideas and in 90 minutes or less he gave me all the ideas I wanted, and I practically decided to write the book.² He told me lots more interesting things. I make no mention here of his general ideas. Those are in my head only, and the impression they left is the only important thing to me. This alone decided me that I would write the novel.

Saturday, March 19th.

I went to the Goupil to see Stanley Spencer's big "Resurrection" (15 ft. long). It contains over 60 figures. It is a sincere and highly emotional affair. I respected it, liked bits of it, and was not pleased with it as a whole. Some of Spencer's sketches, and smaller pictures were very original. "Resurrection" is the talk of London at the moment.

We reached the Savoy Café at 8.40 of the clock. The Savoy Grill Room seemed rather a gloomy place.

¹ "Elmer Gantry."

² This was "Imperial Palace".

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But considering that she was to have an operation to-morrow morning, Dorothy was quite cheerful. I have still been reading Sinclair Lewis's "Elmer Gantry", which is still a very lively and readable affair.

Sunday, March 20th.

The nurse for Dorothy's operation was here about 8 o'clock, and soon D.'s bedroom was transformed into an operating-room.

I walked for about 40 minutes, saw Dorothy, and began to write my chapter at noon precisely. I wrote about 750 words. Saw Dorothy again and then at intervals I wrote more words. Nurse had been sitting in the drawing-room and elsewhere for a change. When she returned to the bedroom I returned to my study, and finished my chapter, and counted the words. I had written a complete chapter of 1,700 words, and was fairly assuaged and content. Then went and had my own dinner and drank some Burgundy, and read Sinclair Lewis's "Elmer Gantry", which is acutely alive and readable. Then I saw Dorothy again, and came downstairs and had half of one of my new Partaga cigars. I saw Dorothy again, previous to her being arranged for the night. I came back to my study and finished my cigar, and read more "Elmer Gantry". Finally I got to bed by 11 p.m. but with the expectancy of a disturbed night. I didn't spend one penny of petty cash all day. It was a satisfactory day, considering all circumstances, and I had done a day's work sufficient for even an absolutely free day.

Monday, March 21st.

I've written 20,000 words in the last twelve days. I had to order the meals and wrestle with the French cook this morning. Also I had a highly disturbing letter from F. C. B. about a wild project of his for coming to London; which upset me. So that by 10.30, after I had seen Dorothy twice, although I had had a very calm pre-prandial time (from 6.30 to 8.30), I was beginning to have a headache and felt *dans tous mes états*. I went out for an idea-finding walk, and got to the South Kensington Museum and sat down in a corner, and no sooner had I done so than four workmen came to disturb me by moving trestles. No sooner had they gone than the ideas came to me in a vague but satisfactory rush; and I walked straight out again. I saw Dorothy a third time, and exactly at 12 sat down to work and

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at 12.35 had actually written 700 words. It seems as if nothing can stop me from working just now.

Tuesday, March 22nd.

I went out to South Kensington Museum at 11.15 to find ideas, and got them, among English pictures of a second-rate kind, easily. I came home. And at 1 p.m. had written 400 words. Before 6 I had written another 1,400 words of the novel: 1,800 words in all, the complete chapter describing the railway accident. I wrote it at great speed, and was rather pleased with it.

Thursday, March 24th.

Strange to say, after I had seen Dorothy again, and sat down in my easy chair in the study to think, I instantly saw the end of the chapter, with scarcely any cerebration, and went to the desk to write it. I did 800 words in about an hour. I then walked up to Fortnum and Mason, reflecting creatively.

During dinner I suddenly had the idea of not continuing "Accident" until after my return from the Greek cruise. I haven't got the ideas very clear yet for Part II, and there is no hurry. And I have heaps of other work to do. I might do two short stories beside all my articles by Good Friday. And I could return to the novel with a fresh mind on my return. I think it might make a radical difference to the end of the novel. This now decided. And yet three hours ago I hadn't the slightest notion of doing it. Now it seems to be the only right thing to do. I discussed various other literary businesses with Dorothy.

Saturday, March 26th.

Fair night, vitiated by over-smoking. However at the end I received from God just over 2½ hours of unbroken sleep, and at 5.45 accordingly felt restored to health. Before dressing I wrote a little opinion, at the request of the *Sunday Express*, about the pirating of Joyce's "Ulysses" by one Samuel Roth. Into this I contrived to insinuate the opinion that Joyce is a very important figure in the evolution of the novel.

Sunday, March 27th.

This was a good day. I did quite enough work, and was fairly well satisfied therewith. Also just before Nurse took Dorothy

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for the last time up to bed, Dorothy and I played the first movement of a fine Haydn Symphony. I've no recollection of ever having played it before, and the music was quite fresh to me.

Tuesday, March 29th.

I went by bus to Trafalgar Square, and into the National Gallery, and stayed there for an hour, and greatly enjoyed Nicolas Poussin's "Nativity", which is the most amusing "Nativity" I have ever seen; and I came out with the required idea, which I shall begin to write to-morrow.

James O'Connor¹ came in. I walked up to Piccadilly with him. He said: "I only heard indirectly of the change in your circumstances, my dear Arnold. My wife would much like to call. She is very fond of babies." We travelled by bus together to Sloane Street. Home at 2.45. Corrected a *Sunday Pictorial* article. Decent sleep. I then wrote 400 words of an *Evening Standard* article by 4 o'clock, when Michael Morton called by appointment. He told me that he thought he could sell the film rights of "Riceyman Steps" to the Gainsborough people (Hitchcock, producer) for £2,500. I told him to go away and do it.

This morning I read a Russian short story before leaving the house on the idea-quest, to inspire me. It did inspire me. D. and I played Haydn after dinner.

Thursday, March 31st.

Bernard Shaw and wife, Molly MacCarthy, and Francis Birrell came to lunch. I was constrained, as always in the society of G. B. S. He talked a lot and well.

I had a sleep and wrote 400 words more of my story.

In the afternoon, Beaverbrook called me up on the phone, and we agreed that he should pay £2,250 for British serial rights of "Accident". He tried for £2,000.

Saturday, April 2nd.

I had the idea of going up to Poland Street, and buying a ring for Dorothy. I bought three rings, two for her and one for myself, for which I paid cash. I had a chat with old Calipé. This shop does not seem to change. The two are still there with the old man, cheerful and spry and good-natured.

¹ Sir James O'Connor, the eminent Irish lawyer.

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I went out to join Dorothy at Jeanne de Casalis's home. There was a man named Sir Something H. there and Malcolm Keen. He was wrong and precise about everything. Practically the whole evening was spent in discussing how to start a decent theatrical enterprise. When I looked at my watch it was 11.30. We reached home at 12.5. Jeanne has some sense. K. has some sense. Perhaps Dorothy had more than either of them. I was sardonic and realistic.

Sunday, April 3rd.

The Messmore Kendalls came for lunch. I showed them the picture of Hondecoeter of which I had got them the refusal. He would have bought it instantly, but there is a large peacock in the picture, and Messmore said that his mother held that peacocks (with certain other birds) were unlucky, and that if they had it in the house she would never be induced to come into the same. I felt at once that I could turn the peacock idea into a story.¹

Monday, April 4th.

A fairly idle day. I went to South Kensington Museum, and looked at the de Wint oils. I searched for ideas; but not too seriously. However, I found enough. Yesterday I read a lot of Gorky's novel "Decadence". It is very fine. The best thing of his that I have read.

Wednesday, April 6th.

We lunched at Jane and H. G. Wells's: Nevinson, Lady Currie, M. et Madame Emile Boul, Mrs. Williams, Ellis, and Walter Roch. A bad meal but a good lunch.

Dorothy and I dined with Beaverbrook at the Vineyard. Masterman was there, but nobody else. A young blonde, Kitty Kinross, came in about 11. Max was in great form as a raconteur of scandals. Very great fun. We left at 11.50 to go to Syrie Maugham's house-warming party in King's Road. A large crowd.

Friday, April 8th.

My short story had a considerable momentum, and I had written another 700 words of it by 11.30, or even earlier. At 6 I wrote

¹ This story, "The Peacock", was reprinted in "The Night Visitor".

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a lot more of my story, and then corrected more proofs of "The Woman Who Stole Everything".

The Charles Cochrans, the Aldous Huxleys, Maurice Baring and Viola Tree came for dinner, and Jeanne de Casalis and Malcolm Keen came in about 10.30.

Sunday, April 10th.

I went out for a stroll, both morning and afternoon, but it was chilly. In Sloane Square a mob-orator preaching against Socialism to a sparse audience and making a collection afterwards. I expect he partly lives on it. He looked conceited: all these mob orators do, even when they have no mob in front of them.

I finished reading Sullivan on Relativity, and I also read Montmorency's new little book "From Kant to Einstein", in the evening. So that I now have enough instinct for my article—Relativity—for the *Evening Standard*. Dorothy and I dined at home. I read afterwards, though *éveinté*, and got her to play Beethoven to me.

Monday, April 11th.

I now began to feel as if my work was drawing to a close. I mean the work I have to do before going away. I wrote an article on Relativity for the *Evening Standard* this afternoon and this morning. I then found that I have five of these articles in hand. I might do another one to-morrow.

Sir George Lewis, Sir Roderick and Lady Jones, Olga Lynn, Gertrude Jennings, and Humbert Wolfe dined. This party was a rather noisy success. Everyone gabbled. Lewis was more ingratiatingly Oriental than ever.

Tuesday, April 12th.

Anthony Ellis wrote to me asking if he could do "Don Juan" with Ivor Novello as Don Juan. I wrote an answer, No, and then tore it up, having decided to talk to Dorothy about the affair.

I read two 'art' books—T. Bodkin's "The Approach to Painting" and Clive Bell's "Landmark of 19th-cent. Art", for the purpose of writing an article about them for the *Evening Standard*. Then drove to Reform Club, and began lunch, by myself. H. G. Wells, who joined me, said that he had lost

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the art of reading. He got restless if he read for long. Perhaps his eyes—but I know it isn't his eyes. Because I'm just the same, and I know it isn't my eyes.

Dorothy and I dined at the Yacht Club. Not a very good dinner, but they had a new antique Italian chandelier which gave us much pleasure.

I was strangely depressed all day. I think it was purely physical, but I can't be sure.

At 5 a.m. (Wednesday) I came down to my study, and smoked a cigarette, and got "Monsieur Parent" to read. Maupassant is still wearing very well.

Wednesday, April 13th.

We dined with Max at the *Daily Express* office. Tim Healy, and Kitty Kinloch were there. Then we went to another party at Maria Huxley's in a little flat in Onslow Mews East. Present, St. John Hutchinson, young Franchetti and pretty wife, J. W. N. Sullivan, and Mark Gertler.

Friday, April 15th.

Left Victoria 9 a.m. for Rome and Taormina.

Grand Hotel Continentale, Rome, Saturday, April 16th.

Lovely morning. Environs of Turin, 8 a.m. The journey passed without incident. The train was always punctual and arrived at Rome exactly at the appointed hour, 8.10 p.m. Not a bad achievement for an international train. I got a porter at once, and he carried my stuff across the Piazza to this hotel. I was served by a middle-aged kindly waiter evidently alcoholic, though not drunk at that moment.

Then put on my overcoat and went for a walk round the big church S. Maria degli Angeli close by. Squeaking trams on curves. Many hotels here near the station. Then I walked into the station, in which one of the chief departments was apparently the Militia 'Commando'. I went to bed at or before 11, having eaten a bit too much. Nothing much on the train journey here, except that I read "Brothers Karamazov". Third or fourth time of reading. Yes, fourth time. I read it slowly to savour it. It is very great and masterful. An English-woman, fattish, sixtyish, very energetic, had the *cabine* next to mine. She talked at length to anyone she could get hold of

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about Mussolini and her interview with him and the greatness of Italy, rottenness of France, and muddledness of England. Loud voice, very tedious. A Fascist, carrying the insignia, and the official card with photograph. I had to sit opposite to her at lunch. She tried hard to get up a talk, but I beat her off. All her ideas were wrong. But if anything evil happened to her in Italy she might well change them all. Her acquaintance with Italian customs and Italian was such that when she got her lunch bill and saw "Tassa di Bollo" at the foot of it, she called the waiter and said she hadn't had any *tassa*. She talked French volubly and not well.

The sunset round about Civita Vecchia was richly marvellous. Such a thing as you couldn't see in England. The whole day was lovely, and quite warm. Lovely bright leaves and blossoms on the trees everywhere. Especially after emerging from the Mont Cenis tunnel, and later it was marvellous.

Rome-Taormina Train, Sunday, April 17th.

I had another good night, despite trams and other things outside. I hired a car, after lots of various letter-writing and note-making, and drove to S. Maria Maggiore, St. Peter's, S. Giovanni Laterano and Santa Croce, and made notes on the same. I also drove up to the Garibaldi Monument (Monte Gianicolo). All this in two hours. I did not feel like lunching wholesale in the hotel, so I went out and found a little *trattoria*, and ate there. Then hired a horse cab, and went to the Pincio Gardens. Very dusty everywhere in Rome. Paid bill and made arrangements, and then went for a walk. The Terme in front of the station was closed, but the church (I forget the name) was open, and I went in there and found in the vast place a congregation evidently waiting for a sermon. When I looked at my watch it was 5.25. Train due at 6. I hurried off. I only caught the train by six minutes. It left one minute late, but got to Naples on time.

S. Domenico Palace Hotel, Taormina, Sicily, Monday, April 18th.

No restaurant on the train between Naples and Sicily. The car-conductor made black coffee in a little kettle at the end of the corridor. I had two cups with great joy at 8 a.m.

We got to S. Giovanni fairly on time (9.35), but fiddled about some time in getting carriages 3 abreast on the steamer-ferry.

It was raining. I walked about on the steamer itself, unovercoated in the spitting rain. The crossing took exactly half an hour. We were 20 minutes late on leaving S. Giovanni. But the restaurant had been hooked on, and a hungry lot of us rushed into it and began eating before the train left. I had already eaten two apples and an orange and I said to myself, I wouldn't eat much else. But could I resist eggs and bacon? I could not. I ate all there was. This was after 10.30. It didn't seem long before we were at Taormina, where nearly everybody got out. The San Domenico bus was soon full. The climb up to the hotel is terrific. I should say 5 or 600 feet, and when you are in the hotel dining-room you look down on the sea almost perpendicularly. The hotel seems really to have been a monastery. Kahn telegraphed saying 'they' would arrive to-morrow afternoon. He is attentive.

Tuesday, April 19th.

Another incredibly good night. I got up at 6.30, feeling that I had had enough sleep. I felt in the humour for work. I decided the form of my cruise articles, namely, the disjointed note form—rather like Taine's "Notes sur l'Angleterre". I wrote several such notes during the day, and I may do more before I go to bed. I left my room at 10.3 after much leisureliness, and decided to go up hill.

The clerk at the reception told me that Otto K. and party would arrive at 6.30. They did, punctually, having come from Palermo—6 hours' travelling; Kahn being still full of energy. I met Dougherty the painter, and Joe Davidson the sculptor, and Frank Crowninshields after 15½ years, and didn't recognise any of them. There is also a David Gray, playwright (part author of "The Best People"), and of course also Rudolf Kommer.

Wednesday, April 20th.

The whole band of us, Kahn, Kommer, Dougherty, Davidson, Gray and Crowninshields, went out with the mayor, or *podestà*, of Taormina to see the Greek temple, which we saw, and had great fun listening to an Italian guide speaking cockney English to the populace. Then drinks on the *terrasse* of the Timeo Hotel.

A lovely day to-day, with a superlative moving view of Etna. Some clouds later, and never really hot.

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Hotel des Etrangers, Syracuse, Thursday, April 21st.

Lovely morning. We drove down to Taormina station and caught the 10.18 for Syracuse, which was ten minutes late. I saw a fourmaster as we entered the town. I said to Kahn: "She's here." But we couldn't be quite sure; I might have seen a four-masted trading schooner. The guide awaiting us at the station said that no yacht had come in. We drove to the port, and there was the yacht all right—a magnificent object. Thrilling. We went on board and were greeted by Captain Davies (a Chester man), very young for the post, I thought. We looked over the state-rooms and saloons. Highly satisfactory. Beautiful. The artists were thrilled by the yacht. So was I, only more so.

We went to the Hotel des Etrangers (Casa Polliti) which overlooks the port, and Kahn engaged rooms there. I insisted on some of them having a cup of tea before we rushed off in a terrific haste and pothole of dust to the Greek Theatre for a performance in the Greek convention of Aristophanes' "The Clouds". I expected to be bored by this, but was not. It was very impressive as much by itself as by its surroundings. All classic, legendary, history. Good acting of the play. Clear enunciation heard at a great distance. Fine dancing. I understood all of a sudden the classicalness of the classic drama. We stayed about 100 minutes. It was getting a bit chilly after a blazing afternoon. We saw the quarry De Pasadora, and heard its echo, and saw the surroundings, all very impressive. Then to the Duomo—Greek, Moorish and Christian—still more impressive. Then back to the hotel.

Yacht "Flying Cloud". Course about E. Friday, April 22nd.

We all went out soon after ten to the Museum, and saw two fine statues, including the Venus Anadyomeni, and a finer earlier one in bronze, and some vases, including a few Greek indecencies; then to the catacombs, very large, but not very interesting; they seemed to me, oddly, to have been made stuffy by the residence of Christians in them; then to the Latomia, the second one, finer even than the one we saw yesterday.

I forget now what time we were clear of the harbour but it must have been something after 5 p.m. When I took the log about 6, we were doing, according to me, 8.9 knots. I then

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came to my bunk and slept. I felt very tired and not like doing any work, though I had work in my head almost ready.

"Flying Cloud", between Sicily and Cape Matapan, Saturday, April 23rd.

I didn't have a great deal of sleep, but felt that I had had enough sleep. Sore throat which I might have cured if I could have stopped smoking; but I couldn't. The thing would have to be much more serious to make me give up this habit even for a time. I thought about an article on Syracuse; so soon I was determined to write it to-day. I was chatting with the Chief Officer on the poop before 6 a.m. Perfect morning. Saw one sail, a brig, about ten miles to the north going westward. Saw nothing else all day. There was a slant of wind, and I reckon that the ship was making 3 or 4 knots under sail only. Four sails set, 2 topsails, 1 top stay-sail, the sky-sail and three jibs. Bridge has been played nearly the whole day. And it has been a simply magnificent day. Captain Davies said that he was not a yacht-captain but a captain in a yacht. Well, the yacht shows it.

"Flying Cloud", Nauplia, Monday, April 25th.

We left the yacht at Getheon at 8.3 a.m. and motored to Sparta and Mistra; thence by foot and by mule to the ruined Byzantine city of the Paleologues above Mistra. Lunch in nun's house by church. We left there at 2.30 and motored 100 miles through Arcadia and Argos to Nauplia, where we dined (very well) at the Hotel Bretagne.

"Flying Cloud", at sea between Milo and Crete, Wednesday, April 27th.

We anchored in Milo harbour at 7.40 a.m. I had then written 800 words. At 9.45 we went ashore and took mules to the little town on the opposite coast. Damnably uncomfortable riding. I determined to walk back, and did so, despite the considerable heat. We stopped at a curio shop and had wine and water and Turkish delight. The walk back was exhausting. Some of us 'had a dip' off the ship before lunch. It all arose from me saying that if the commodore bathed I should. Kahn replied: "This is a challenge which the Commodore will

not reject."
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not reject." In five minutes he was undressed. In six minutes I was.

We weighed anchor for Crete at 1.20, being then 6 hours in front of our schedule time. There was no object in staying longer at Milo. We saw the place where the Venus was found. At about 5 p.m. we saw the mountains of Crete, 60 or 70 miles off, the highest rising to over 8,000 feet. The wind shifted westward and gave us a slant. Sail was made, but by the time it was made, the wind had nearly died away.

"Flying Cloud", Thursday, April 28th.

At 5.45 a.m. Crete seemed to be farther off than it was yesterday afternoon at tea time. In fact sometimes you couldn't see it at all. I would not go up to the poop to talk to the officer of the watch because I wanted to think of what I should write about Milo. I wrote the 400 words by 7 a.m. We dropped anchor in the Candia roadstead about 8.30 a.m. We went ashore at 9.30, and drove straight to the Knossos excavations. Very wonderful, but I was disappointed in the size. Drove to the Museum in the town. Not in the least disappointing. Got back to the ship at 12.20, exhausted. Some of us bathed.

We left for Santorin at 6 p.m. Slight head wind. This morning when I got up all plain sail was still set, and was drawing nicely.

"Flying Cloud", near Paros, Friday, April 29th.

We anchored off the island of Santorin at 5.30 a.m., and shall proceed inside the crater-harbour at 9 a.m. The harbour is too deep for anchorage. Later we went into the crater-harbour. At 8.30 Kahn, Crowninshield and Gray walked up to the nearest town. Paul Dougherty, Davidson and I made sketches. The walkers returned at 11.30. Kahn said that he was sixty, and had never yet known the sensation of either mental or physical fatigue. This I believe. He never is tired.

We anchored about 7, near Paros, for the night, instead of going on to Delos as the skipper was not sure of the lying at Delos, and a N. wind had sprung up. It died about 10.15.

"Flying Cloud", Piræus, off Athens, Sunday, May 1st.

I corrected my *Sunday Pictorial* article and prepared things for post, and read François Mauriac, and began to concoct a

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conte libertin.—Indeed, idleness. I had my first view of the Parthenon and the Acropolis at 3 p.m. We must have anchored shortly before. I couldn't see it properly because of a smaller hill just above it, and rising higher. The harbour people who came aboard seemed a smartly-dressed and fishy lot. No luggage was examined. We none of us went ashore except Kahn, who searched for me to go with him, but didn't disturb me because he thought I was asleep. As a fact I was writing the opening chapters of the *roman libertin* (I had enlarged it from the mere *conte* above referred to) which I had in mind. I wrote two chapters (3,000 words in all) in a very short time. Shows what you can do when you really have something to say.

Kommer described the beauties of bridge to me very well indeed yesterday morning. He really did *show* its beauties, and made you feel his own pleasure in it as an art and a craft. He started to teach me piquet, but I gave it up, as it bewildered me. He still said that he could make me a *good* bridge player in ten days, if I would practise two hours a day. I decline to believe it, but he insisted. He said: "I'm sure of it, I know you could learn. In the first place *you have no vanity*——" However, I don't think I shall learn bridge all the same.

At dinner we talked about the causes of the war, and Kahn was very good on the subject, and showed both knowledge and sense and breadth. He is certainly a tremendous admirer of England's political wisdom. He almost has it on the brain.

Hotel Petit Palais, Athens, Monday, May 2nd.

We left the yacht at 9.30 about, and after landing drove to this hotel. Not an attractive city; but a very good and very small hotel. The first person I saw was Arthur Rubinstein, in a bath-gown, just out of his bath. He joined us at lunch and talked all the time. Kommer called him a traveller in music, and enlarged on this definition very well indeed. We went to the National Museum. The pre-Phidias things were the best. I made up a theory out of this, which I shall use. We then drove to the Acropolis. Dust. Great heat. The Acropolis and the Parthenon fully sustained their reputation. The spectacle was really overwhelming. Also the Anterior room in the Acropolis Museum was equally overwhelming. What sensations! Extreme exhaustion. But after tea, despite this,

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Kommer and Dougherty and I went out shopping, but didn't get all the photos we wanted. They don't exist in Athens, being out of stock. We were recommended to get them in Florence!

Tuesday, May 3rd.

Sleep. Great discussions in the air throughout the day about a change of plans which would make Constantinople possible. The thing to be settled to-night, I hope. We saw a Byzantine small church after sleep. Intense heat. Then we went shopping in the 'Shoe Street' (second-hand quarter). I bought a heavy gold, silver and lace scarf-shawl for Dorothy from Salamis; old. Then tea, to which came Mr. Hill, formerly head of the American archæological school here. He took us to the Acropolis, and was intensely interesting and brilliantly clear the whole time.

Lloyd Triestino Steamer "Féodora" between Athens and Constantinople, Saturday, May 7th.

After many delays, we drove to the town of Piræus. Quite a big town, with some streets terribly shabby and slatternly and badly paved, and others rather handsome. After quite a long time we reached the port, and it was quite a port, full of steamers. At last the launch fetched us to the *Féodora*, which had evidently only just arrived. Immense *va et vient* and confusion. We found our cabins. The luggage was brought in correctly. More delays. The ship however left at 5.48, only 18 minutes late. Lovely afternoon and dusk. Smooth sea. Light wind. Lovely view of Piræus on leaving, and marvellous views of the Acropolis half an hour later.

The general atmosphere of the ship was *très sympathique*. A heavenly night. Our lot played just as much cards as usual.

Pera Palace Hotel, Constantinople, Sunday, May 8th.

The sight of the Dardanelles, which we entered about 8 a.m., had a strange solemnising effect. Not, however, on those who were still in bed, or on those who stuck in a corner of the smoking room and played bridge. Cooper, Kahn's valet, was the only person who mentioned to me his sensations on beholding Cape Helles and the monument to the slain.

We moored at about 7 p.m. and were kept in the boat till

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about 8.45 by passport delays, there being many officials and much fuss. Owing to bad staff work two of the three cars went to Yildiz Kiosque for dinner—miles out, when the rendezvous was at the Toklin Hotel. They were brought back by telephone. Good dinner at the Toklin.

Monday, May 9th.

At 10 we went forth in two cars and saw Santa Sophia, the Blue Mosque, the subterranean bath (Yerebatan Palace as it is called), the Big Bazaar and a mosque (unknown) where a service was going on. Lunch at the Turquoise Restaurant, which is Russian. Very good, and served by Russian girls, said by the proprietor to be wives or widows of Russian officers, etc.

The Big Bazaar is very good, and we wanted to go there again. I did very little in the afternoon in the way of seeing, but I wrote quite a lot both before and after tea. Dined at Yildiz Kiosque. A weak imitation of Monte Carlo as regards the gambling. Croupiers very quiet indeed. Petits Champs music-hall. A few women there. Nice auditorium. Among the audience, Polgar noticed a young man who had killed his wife, from jealousy, in Vienna. Bored. We got home at just after midnight.

"Flying Cloud", between Itea and Olympia, Saturday, May 14th.

At 9.50 we went off in the launch, and three motor cars left at 10 a.m. precisely bearing us, and a luncheon, up to Delphi. Wondrous scenery. Eagles. Clouds. Craggy hillsides. Roads zigzagging upwards in the distance. Hill had charge of us, and Polemi, the regular guide, was worn down to a cipher. The Museum is excellently arranged. After seeing all we wanted to of the Delphic remains we had tea by the plane tree on the spot where Agamemnon is said to have planted a plane tree, and drove back to Itea. I was on board again at 2 p.m. I got Hill to tell me more about the Delphic Oracle business. Then, determined not to write my impressions until after tea, I passed the time in wirelessing and writing to Dorothy, and in reading up about Delphi.

"Flying Cloud", between Kalakolo and Corfu, Sunday, May 15th.

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used merely to employ the hands, apparently thus soothing the nerves. It has no religious significance. The village of Kalakolo was decorated for some fête of the Virgin, and on a high terrace we saw males dancing, and the sound of an instrument like a bagpipes came to us.

The moonlit scene, as the yacht passed between Cephalonia and Ithaca was marvellous, both in romantic quality and in beauty. I got all the card-players out to see it.

"Flying Cloud", Wednesday, May 18th.

I wrote a description of Cattaro, the ride to Ragusa, and Ragusa before 6 a.m. after only about four hours' sleep. After breakfast we went ashore, and visited monasteries, etc., under the direction of the head of a museum. Some of us left him early and sat in a café. Then rejoined the yacht at the small port and sailed to old Ragusa.

"Flying Cloud", Spalato, Thursday, May 19th.

We arrived at Spalato about 8 a.m. Lunch on the yacht. Then off in three cars to see Trani, 17 or 18 miles. A rotten, dusty, noisy drive. First we saw the remains of a large Roman town, once the capital of Dalmatia, then a series of horrid cement works in clouds of smoke, and then suddenly we were in Trani, a perfectly preserved mediæval town, with a marvellous church, with marvellous sculptures (especially an Adam and Eve on a porch) in a marvellous state of preservation.

"Flying Cloud", at sea between Spalato and Venice, Friday, May 20th.

A magnificent morning. Flat calm sea. The departure of the yacht renewed all my ferocious desire to be running my own yacht. But now I want a better yacht, faster than the *Marie Marguerite*. By 11 o'clock I had written in all 1,100 words of my article for Hearsts, and by 6.15 I had written over 2,000 words of it.

At 11.30 we were at anchor within the narrow channel leading to a town beginning with S.¹, rather mediæval. We took the launch, without a pilot, up the river or inlet, to find a celebrated waterfall. We got lost, and ended in a cul-de-sac. Where-

¹ Sebenico.

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upon we took a hunchback from a village for a pilot, and returned.

We regained the yacht at 2.15, and lunched. The yacht got under way instantly. A very hot afternoon. I had intervals on deck. We called at Zara about 7.30. The Port authority would not let us land till the doctor had been on board. So we got out of the launch on to the yacht again. Whereupon the officer said we could land. Ashore military officers had heard of Kahn, and were very polite. Zara is a nice new-looking city, with a straight front right on the sea and many largish cafés on the front. Plenty of promenaders, including many girls, nice-looking. Narrow thronged streets behind, plenty of movement. Much Italianised—you can feel the clinch of the Italian protectorate—and a street called Gabriele d'Annunzio, etc.

"Flying Cloud", Venice, Saturday, May 21st.

In the afternoon I went on with my own private novel about Arthur.

We sailed all day, and got familiar with the lights of Venice about 9.30, feeling our way up and taking a cast at intervals; there was never less than nine fathoms. We flared for a pilot about 10.30, but none came. About 11.30 we cast anchor; but where, I hadn't the slightest idea. A fine day, with a head wind the whole time, but not much of it.

"Flying Cloud", Venice, Sunday, May 22nd.

I hired a two-man gondola after breakfast, and Jo Davidson and I went first to the Grand Hotel and then to the Piazza, and saw the cathedral with some others, and then he and I went off alone and we had a drink at Florian's, and then we resumed the gondola and went to the Belle Arti, and once more I was not particularly struck by it. Then we did a tour of some of the small canals and saw the Colleoni statue and got back to the yacht at 12.30.

In the morning Davidson, Crowninshields and I had ordered a dinner (to be given by the gang to Kahn) in the evening.

After the dinner, which was good, Kahn took us all to the opera "La Samaritana della Scala" by a young composer "Gusmini". Rotten.





ARNOLD BENNETT IN VENICE, 1927

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Sacher Hotel, V

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Friday, May 6

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MAY 21-MAY 27, 1927

Monday, May 23rd.

Pouring with rain. Having nothing to do, I continued my short "Arthur" novel, and wrote about 1,000 words. Then ashore at 12.50.

Sacher Hotel, Vienna, Tuesday, May 24th.

Captain Davies came with us to the station (Venice) in the launch. The Grand Canal was marvellously beautiful in the morning light. Train left sharp at 6.25 with Polgar, Kommer, and me in it. Scenery excellent all the way, and magnificent in places. Train arrived at Vienna, before time.

Wednesday, May 25th.

The Schlesingers and Mrs. Adler (Reinhardt's secretary) came to lunch on Kommer's invitation. Then I got my own room and unpacked. Tea with Kommer at a café. Then to station, where we met Dorothy. Diana Cooper and Iris Tree were in the train going to Buda-Pesth.

Thursday, May 26th.

We got out at 1 o'clock and then drove, against our judgment, to Hubertshof Restaurant. Wet. Took 35 minutes. A large place, chiefly for outdoor work. We were the only customers. Good service. Rothschilds and Chaliapin had been there the night before. At night, when full, it must be a great sight. Got back into Vienna at 3.20. The Art Museum was closed. We strolled around. Then to the "Rosenkavalier" at the Opera House. Full house. Good performance. Olczewska as Ottavia was great. They were all good. Met Count Kralich there. Music critic—*trés distingué*. Then to the fashionable supper place. The grill of the Bristol Hotel. This day, apart from my fatigue, was very satisfactory.

Friday, May 27th.

My birthday.

We went to the Picture Gallery in the morning. Great sensations. I was really astounded by the splendour of this gallery. Masterpieces all over the place. We must have had lunch somewhere, but I can't remember where.

A snack at the Restaurant Sacher in the Ring (no connection

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with the hotel). Good. Then dress, to go to Hoffmannsthal's play "Der Schwierige". Comedy. Superb production. Very fine acting by Gustav Waldau, Helene Thimig and Lilly Darvos (wife of Molnar). But everyone acted well. The whole affair thoroughly and soundly artistic. Reinhardt's secretary came in and looked after us and explained to us. She is the soul of benevolence.

Monday, May 30th.

We saw the Prater, and went along the Danube a bit, and then had tea at some place, and got back at 6.5. This was very agreeable. The Danube is quite a stream. D. and I dined at an open air restaurant near the Theater an der Wien. Decent. Then to the said theatre to see Oscar Strauss's "Die Konigen", supposed to be the rage of the moment. Vienna is the centre and birthplace of musical comedy. Yet the show was very poor. Music, on its own plane, not so awful, but the rest awful. Two women and one man: three stars all well on in age, and without real talent for either singing, dancing, or acting, and without voices. The whole affair slack, inartistic, dull, and largely ugly to the eye. We stood two acts.

Wednesday, June 1st.

Left Vienna at 9.5. Journey without any particular incident.

Monday, June 6th.

I finished my *Evening Standard* article. It was only sixteen days since I had written anything; yet I felt as if I had not written for a long time, and I was strangely satisfied to have written something again. I then read 'in' various poetries and novels.

Maurice Browne was in the drawing-room practising "Don Juan" scenes with Dorothy. By arrangement they came into my study for tea, and we discussed a change at the end of the play. I then drove off to visit Jane Wells. H. G. opened the door himself. Jane was lying on a broad sofa in the drawing-room. She looked ill, but not so ill as I had expected. Enlarged eyes. A sort of exhausted but determined wild cheerfulness in her. H. G. kept going in and out.

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MAY 30-JUNE 12, 1927

Tuesday, June 7th.

I went to Arts Theatre Club, where I found the St. John Ervines and dined at their table.

The Ervines and I went on to the Italian puppets at the Scala. This show, to my surprise, was very good, and I much enjoyed it. Home at 11.15.

Wednesday, June 8th.

I read through the whole of the second part of "Accident" in typescript in the morning, and was rather pleased with it. Miss Nerney is very pleased with it, and insists on its marked originality. Whereat I was well satisfied. Otto Kahn, H. G. Wells, Eleanor Wylie, Jeanne de Casalis, and Maurice Browne came to lunch, and there was a vast amount of chatter. Otto was in lovely form.

At 11.10 Dorothy and I went off to Lady Hulton's ball at Claridge's. This began dully, but ended very brightly. Large number of people there whom I didn't know. But I knew a lot. I had some talk with Valentine Williams, Peter Page, and the Roderick Joneses. Lilian Braithwaite and a male escort of hers joined us for supper.

Thursday, June 9th.

"The Woman Who Stole Everything and other stories" was published to-day, and was reviewed in the *Manchester Guardian* by Ivor Brown.

Sunday, June 12th.

Alone in the house until to-night. Telephone invitation from Syrie Maugham to dine at her house to-night. I accepted for us both.

Lunch alone, during which I finished reading the current number of *Nature*. Sleep. After which I read Wells's Lecture at the Sorbonne, "Democracy under Revision", of which he gave me a copy yesterday. Then I went again at my article, and I had finished it at 4.35. I read a lot of Graves's and Edith Sitwell's poetry, and two highbrow monthlies and year books, and most of Virginia Woolf's new novel "To the Lighthouse". In fact, I had quite a day of writing and reading.

We did actually meet the Maughams at 8.31. Syrie was not

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down, but W. S. M. awaited us. The new house is now practically finished and looks very strange and agreeable. I saw Liza Maugham (aged 13) for the first time, after having heard of her for years and years. This evening was very agreeable. Just us four, and some nice talking.

I read a few pages of "Karamazoo" before sleeping. The relief of a masterpiece after all the 'current' stuff which I had been reading and writing during the day!

Tuesday, June 14th.

I drove to the Reform Club to lunch with Herbert Samuel and Gardiner about the project for a dinner of Liberal intellectuals to be held at the Reform. Samuel was late, and he hadn't engaged a table, which rather vexed me. However, his subsequent explanation that he had been at Lord Swaythling's funeral and couldn't avoid lateness placated and reassured me. Sir William Collins, secretary of the Political Committee of the Reform Club, was also of the party. We made out a list of suitable guests, and all went well, and Samuel and Collins disappeared immediately the meal was over. In answer to my questions Gardiner told me that he had known Samuel for over twenty years, and that he was an honest man and a *good* man, and entirely dependable, and a tremendous worker.

I had coffee with Siegfried Sassoon and Osbert Sitwell, who were going to Strindberg's "Spook Sonata" at the Globe, where Dorothy also was going. I got home just before 3 and reposed and read till 4. More letters. Correction of *Evening Standard* article. I went on with "Accident", interrupted only by tea, and wrote over 700 words—rather good words, I thought.

We dined at the Julian Huxleys'.

Wednesday, June 15th.

I arose earlyish, ate fruit, and smoked a cigarette on my balcony. Milkmen and newsboys and a few cyclists moving about in the Square, in perfect silence. Uncanny: romantic. I wrote about 800 words by 12.15, and then walked to the Reform Club, where I lunched. Home by bus. Sleep. A headache afterwards. Why? But I coué-ed most of it away at once. Work on "Accident".

Duff Tayler came to dinner and we went to see Constance Collier in an American play "Meet the Wife". She was good,

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but the show as a whole was so awful that we left after the 2nd Act.

Thursday, June 16th.

Not a good night. I left the house at 8.43 by car to see houses at Rye, Winchelsea, and Littlestone-on-Sea. We had seen our first house at Rye before noon. I got back at 7.9, having driven 184.6 miles. Lovely day. Winchelsea heavenly. I think "The Retreat" there will be our choice.

Saturday, June 18th.

Duff Tayler dined with us at Ciro's, and we went to Seymour Hicks's "Mr. What's His Name" at Wyndham's. At second interval we went round to see him. Tears were in his eyes from the stress of the performance. He gave a marvellous show. In the third act he turns the farce into a tragedy, or at least into a highly emotional comedy—with the greatest convincingness.

Sunday, June 19th.

Maurice Browne and a man named Lewis (a B.B.C. person) came for tea. I left them at 5, and they proceeded to rehearse the 2nd Act of my "Don Juan" in the drawing-room.

Some fairly heavy showers.

Browne and Dorothy came into my study after the drawing-room rehearsal, and he and I discussed his misapprehension about me having given him an option on "Don Juan". I told him plainly that all I could do was, if a big, established management took the play, to instruct the management to consider him, Browne, seriously as the producer of the play. Dorothy wanted air, and so we walked out and called at a chemist to get my finger dressed; I had cut it instead of my nails at 7.45 p.m. While it was being dressed Dorothy chatted with a *grue* who was taking a pick-me-up in the shop. Then we returned to the Green Park, and I had the opportunity of watching the nervousness of the Russian danseuse before she ran into the restaurant for her turn.

Tuesday, June 21st.

Went to the Savoy to the luncheon given to Blumenfeld¹ in

¹ R. D. Blumenfeld, editor of the *Daily Express*.

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honour of the completion of his 40th year in Fleet Street. A vast crowd of 400, including about 20 women, who seemed lost. I sat at table No. 1, and had one of Blumenfeld's daughters on my left, and George Lewis on my right. Lewis was unwell, overwork: he seemed a bit peevish beneath his amiable manner, and left before the speeches began. The others at the table were Burbidge, head of Harrods, and John Buchan (now M.P.) and two whom I didn't know. These proved to be De Vere Stacpoole and Emile Ludwig (author of the recent books on the Kaiser and Napoleon). I had only a very little talk with him. H. G. Wells ought to have been at my table, but did not come. Churchill and Blumenfeld spoke; neither of them well. Then Birkenhead made a very amusing chaffing speech. I fled as it ended.

I got home at 4.25, and found a letter from Cochran asking me to do an 'impression' of either Walker or Milligan (protagonists in the forthcoming middle-weight championship). I replied and sent up the answer by car. Charles Cochran called about 10.30 by appointment, and I arranged to go with him to-morrow at about 3 to see Walker at the Karsino, Hampton Court, to-morrow.

Thursday, June 23rd.

I had a world article on Walker the boxer to write this morning, and to deliver typed by 1.30. So I began it at 7 a.m. and finished it at 10 a.m., and was able to leave the house shortly afterwards for a walk in a rough wind.

T. S. Eliot came to tea. He was very late after saying he wouldn't be. Talked about books and theatres, and I half promised to let him have a lot of my Florence "Journal" for use in the *New Criterion*. I dined at the Other Club. Small but lively company. Hilton Young sat opposite to me and was amusing. One or two new members: J. M. Keynes very agreeable and rather brilliant; and Salmond, the 2nd in command of the Air Force, very strong and silent. Talk drawn out. I should think he is stern but also agreeable. Looks like one born to great authority. Garvin talked all the evening. Locker Lampson was in the chair. Home at 11.15.

Friday, June 24th.

N. X. came to see me at 9.30 about his critical position. Can't

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get work. Only earned £23 last month. Has shaved off his beard in order to look younger, and so on. Even at this interview, which was supposed to be very serious, he could not keep to the point. He would fly off to odd, trivial matters which had nothing whatever to do with the point, and I had to bring him back to the point again and again. However, it is very easy to criticise a man who has got himself into a mess. I gave him a few ideas for money-making to think over. He left at 10.10. After this my thoughts were miles off my work, and I scarcely hoped to do any. However, by tenacity, I got my thoughts back, and between 11.15 and 12.30 I wrote 600 words of a new chapter of "Accident". I corrected two articles for Hearsts, and then had time to go out for a walk before Noel Coward came for tea. Noel was very bright and good and sensible, and talked much sagacity to Dorothy. He told me that he had started a novel and written 25,000 words but had destroyed it because it was done too hastily and carelessly. He said he *had* to write a play quickly (and that he wrote "Hay Fever" in three days), but he had now found that this method wouldn't do in a novel. So he was going to start again. Just as he left Angus McLeod came, and Dorothy and I interviewed him about "Don Juan". I liked McLeod. He is a very mild, cautious, agreeable man, and neither too Scotch nor too theatrical. Sybil Colefax, Alf Mason, Lilian Braithwaite, Peter Colefax, Cynthia Noble, and Hubert Griffith dined. Terrific talking. In the drawing-room the company got split up too much into couples, though the talking was still as lively as ever. I haven't had a really good night for weeks. However, my work is now going a bit better. I got figures from Flower about book sales to-night. "Rainco" has sold over 29,900 copies, and "The Woman Who Stole" sold 548 copies last week—over 12,000 in all he told me yesterday. So that I was rather pleased. Apropos of my article in the *Daily Mail* to-day, practically everybody I met referred to it. There can be no doubt that no other paper gets into so many hands. In fact everybody seems to make a point of at any rate looking at it. The price of the English-speaking world rights for that 1,200-word article is £270. Highest I ever got, I think.

Saturday, June 25th.

Lunch with Dorothy at home. Then we went off for a drive,

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nominally, but Dorothy landed me at the Tower of London, where I had never been. Very large. Restored to death. Regalia very ugly Large crowds of people. I drove Dorothy to Edith Sitwell's and came home and had tea, and wrote 250 words more of "Accident" and actually finished the chapter.

By the way in the City, on way to Tower of London, we had tea at a Lyons shop. Good tea. These Lyons and similar places always interest me. I *like* going into them for a tea or a snack and seeing life.

Sunday, June 26th.

I had a really great lark in writing my next Thursday's *Evening Standard* article about Oscar Wilde and other authors. I wrote it at great speed and with unusual verve. Bad weather. But I took a walk. Lunch at home. At 3.30 instead of 2.45, we drove off down to Bray, to Leo Schuster's Elgar concert at "The Long White Cloud". Very heavy rain *en route*. A great crowd of cars and fashionable persons in the music-room and the purlieu thereof at Schuster's. The programme was entitled "Homage to Elgar". A nice thought of old Schuster's. We sat, among Sitwells, just outside the barn-like doors of the music-room, and I soon got cold. I spoke to Elgar and he said, when I praised his part of the entertainment: "The silences are good, anyhow." After a pianoforte and violin sonata and a quartet, we departed. Got home at 7.20. We left at 8.10 for the Edes at Hampstead. Arrived there, as was understood, after the meal had begun. Quite a large party. At least 20 or 25 to supper. Yet no servant. Everything done by host and hostess, and everything went absolutely smoothly. Also, supper in two rooms at once. I was in the small room, at the sole table there with the hostess, Urlenski, Beryl de Zoëte, a foreigner whose name I didn't catch, and Danilovna. Several other members of the Russian ballet came later. They could only talk about the Russian ballet. Vera Moore played the piano very well.

Monday, June 27th.

Ivor Novello, Gertrude Jennings and the Julian Huxleys came for dinner. A great deal of talk between Novello and us about "Don Juan". He argued that a long provincial tour would spoil it for London: also that the provinces, except the biggest towns, would not really care for it, would only care for him, and

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that provincial audiences would *force* him to play down to them. He was rather convincing. Huxleys left about 11.35. But Novello stayed till after midnight. He made a favourable impression on me.

Wednesday, June 29th.

Eclipse morning. Began at 5.26 a.m. and finished at 7.18, I think. Rain the whole time. Up till nearly 6.30 (when eclipse supposed to be at its height), I perceived practically no diminution of light; but of course the light didn't increase as normally as it would have done. Eclipse was a complete wash-out. Also I had a thoroughly bad night. I wrote 500 words of "Accident" before lunch. I walked to the Reform Club to meet Swinnerton by appointment, and we lunched. Then I resumed the novel. I wasn't quite so fired up as in the morning. In the morning I made Alan ¹lose his temper, and I did it with such heat that I felt just as if I had lost my own temper when I went down to see Miss Nerney and I felt called upon to explain to her the cause of my demeanour.

I also finished correcting the typescript of my Florence Journal. Miss Nerney said spontaneously: "*I love copying it.*" I think myself that it may be interesting. We dined at the Herbert's: Mark Gertler, Pitman and wife and Ackerley the playwright. One or two people came in afterwards, including the Wilenskis. Mrs. W. is singularly like Mr. W. He and I had some talk. I like him.

Thursday, June 30th.

We left in the car for Easton Glebe at 10.47, 17 minutes late, and got there at 12.40. Jane Wells was in an easy chair and then walking about and she ate lunch with us. Said to be better. But when I asked H. G. privately: "*Is she better?*" he said "No." We sat in a summer-house after lunch, and had tea there at 3.20 and left at 4.5.

Harry Preston gave a dinner at the Green Park Hotel for the Walker-Milligan prize fight. About 22 covers. Michael Arlen and I had the two ends of the long table, and Harry sat in the middle, with Lord Grimthorpe and Solly Joel on his right and left. I was surrounded by Grant Morden, George Sutton, Freddy Lonsdale and George Nichols. Grant Morden talked

¹ Character in "Accident".

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nearly all the time—too much—but he was very interesting about James White's suicide. He said that James lost his head in the end. The matter of finding money to take up the shares had been arranged; it then fell through; but it was picked up again, and X. Y. undertook to 'find the difference'. X. Y.'s secretary sat up all night waiting for W. to come, but White had gone down to his house at Swindon and fixed everything up for his suicide. Michael Arlen drove me and a man called 'Mike' to the fight.

Desolate sight at Olympia. Thousands of empty seats. Charles Cochran gloomy. Harry Preston had been deceived in his seats and was *most* gloomy. However, Cochran changed them and we got magnificent seats. The world-championship fight—Walker *v.* Milligan—was the most exciting I ever saw. Milligan was soon done in. Walker won tremendously. And yet he got scarcely a hand (being American) whereas Milligan, smashed to bits and tottering (with stitches in his lip), was terrifically cheered. This because of Milligan's mad pluck. Walker crossed himself before fighting. Arlen drove me home and came in for a drink. He said his new book had been a great frost. Dorothy and Dolly Wilson were here. Dolly left soon. Arlen at 12.40.

Friday, July 1st.

Appointment for 6 o'clock with Edward Newton, the American bibliophile, apropos of a suggested introduction by him to the reproduced MS. of "The Old Wives' Tale". I was 25 minutes late. A shameful position, and inexcusable. Newton and I agreed that a preface by him seemed neither practicable nor useful, and we gave the idea up, especially as I had already written an introduction myself and the sheets were already printed and signed by me. Dined at home with Dorothy and we went to Playroom Six, 6 New Compton Street, to see d'Annunzio's "The Honeysuckle". The play had form, interest, and power in its voluptuous way, but the performance was simply terrible. The theatre only holds about 100 people. It has a nice atmosphere, and the bar, etc., is *sympathique*, especially the gas-ring lodged on a chair.

Saturday, July 2nd.

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forty minutes' activity in the streets of London; then another 300 words. Then lunch with Dorothy. Then a sleep—not deep or reposeful. Then another 400 words, finishing another chapter. I was then in a state of nerves. But having the scheme of the prefatory note which Bertie Sullivan and Newman Flower desired me to write for their biography of Arthur Sullivan, I decided to write it at once, and I did so, getting it off my chest. 400 words. Sprightly. I then went out for a walk in the fair but unsatisfactory weather. Returned by bus. Dined alone with Dorothy. We played the greater part of Schubert's Octet—pianoforte 4 *mains*. Great noise and fun, which did me much good, for I had been depressed.

Tuesday, July 5th.

Cecil Lewis came to lunch. It seems he is writing a play in blank verse. I left him and Dorothy, who were going off to hear Mrs. Patrick Campbell discourse upon the stage at the Lyric, Hammersmith. After sleep, I wrote 500 words of novel. London representative of the *Amsterdam Telegraaf* came to see me about Dutch rights of my *Evening Standard* articles. A short dark man, probably of Spanish descent, with a foolish short beard. Full of brains and awareness. We were most charming to one another. I said he could have the Dutch rights of the article for £5 a week. I didn't want to ask more.

Wednesday, July 6th.

I walked quickly, with perspiration, in hot sunshine, to get ideas for "Accident", and reached the Tate Gallery. I thought I would look at the Conders. No sooner was I in the Conder room than Aitken, the director, came along, towing Lewis Hind and wife and two young men, one at least of whom was a son of Mitchell Kennerley. Then, when I had shaken myself free, Aitken, who is a very nice fellow, came along again to me and took me along to see the big wall decorations, by a young man named Whistler aged 21, in the refreshment room—decorations still far from finished. I enjoyed them. I got outside and walked around. Finally into a tram to Victoria and thence by bus to Sloane Square. By good chance I found the ideas I wanted, and wrote them for three-quarters of an hour. Then taxi to Reform Club for lunch. Roch, Earl Russell,

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Spender, etc. Spender said that Northcliffe had more than once offered him £100,000 'at any time' to buy the (old) *Westminster Gazette* with, and said that whatever S.'s salary was, it should be doubled.

We went on to Holland Park Hall to see Lenglen play tennis. Sparsely filled. The men's singles (Cozelin and Kinsey) were fine. Women's singles poor, because Lenglen (*v.* Dewhurst) had nothing to do. Cozelin is an exceedingly fine player. I should like to see him against Tilden. Another thing that I should like to see would be Lenglen against a man—I mean a really good one, a first-rate man. She would be beaten, but it would make a fine show, and would restore the public perspective. Lenglen is short and walks well, though with a rather peculiar step.

Friday, July 8th.

Crossing St. James's Square I was accosted by a smart military-bearing man of 60 or so, in white top hat, white waistcoat, etc. "Arnold Bennett?" "Yes," I said. "And you?" He was the second son of A. B. D. S. late of Hanley. He said he had been 30 years in the army. Quite a pleasant encounter. He said I was just like my photos. I didn't like that much.

Then D. and I played 'in' the Grieg pianoforte concerto, and she and I played four hands first movement of a Schubert trio. I drove up to the Garrick Club to dine with Duff Tayler. James Whale was dining here with Dorothy. Quite a warm day. I was fantastically tired at tea-time, after my work.

Saturday, July 9th.

At 4.5 (ten minutes late) we drove to the Tate to see the Conder exhibition; on the whole satisfactory. Also we had tea at the Tate in the room half decorated by young Whistler aged 21. Before 4 o'clock I had written 300 words of a new chapter of "Accident", and after our return between 5.30 and 6.30 I wrote 400 words more. Enough for the day.

I have the last few days been reading Prince Mirsky's volume on Modern Russian literature. Better than I had expected, from memories of the reviews of it. I still have scores of books unopened which I ought to look at but shall not. They seem to come in at the rate of about two a day. I had three to-day.

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Sunday, July 10th.

To Arts Theatre Club, where we sat next to Gerald Duckworth and wife. A curtain-raiser of Sudermann, one of his one-act plays about roses. Rotten, old-fashioned, untrue, purely silly thing. Why it was produced I cannot imagine. Then the "Histoire du Soldat" of Stravinsky. Nothing much in this. Childish re-telling of the old devil-story; very much out of proportion. Music its only *raison d'être* and the music not very distinguished.

Monday, July 11th.

George Arliss came at 4.30 for tea and to discuss Edgar Selwyn's scenario for "Lord Raingo". He had been sufficiently interested to do a scenario of his own, and after much talk he said that he would re-write his own scenario. An attractive, very 'sound' fellow of about 50 or 55, with the true actor's face. Quiet, firm, no frills, no theatrical gush whatever. He said he was frankly old-fashioned as to the art of the theatre. Liked the old. Thought the new no good. Didn't think there had been any progress, or ever would be. I liked him. He stayed till 6 p.m.

We went to the Russian ballet. Enormous crowd. We went chiefly to see Satie's "Mercury" which I rather liked. *Mise en scène* extremely odd and original. I also saw "Cimariosiana" and "The Cat" for the first time. All very original and striking. The Russian ballet is looking up a bit.

Wednesday, July 13th.

Mrs. Patrick Campbell came for lunch. She looked a bit younger, and referred all the time to her great age. She was extremely brilliant, and was magnificent with the baby. She was full of sense and very strongly dissuaded Dorothy from returning to the stage in small parts. She said, better and with more authority, all that I had been saying to Dorothy on this great matter. Home by taxi. I walked to the Reform Club, and dined with Gardiner and Hewart L.C.J. The latter told a number of funny stories, some of which were really funny.

Friday, July 15th.

Duff Tayler and I dined together and we went to the Russian

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ballet Gala performance for the King of Spain, who raised his hands and applauded everything. I saw "The Cat" for the second time, and now am decided that it is beautiful. I saw "Prince Igor" again and thought it magnificent. "The Triumph of Neptune" I definitely did not care for. Vast crowd. The latter half of the Russian ballet season is a great success.

Saturday, July 16th.

At 11.10 we set off by car for Knole, to lunch with Edward Sackville-West. Eddie proved just as delightful as ever. After lunch, Eddie took Dorothy to see the main part of the house—he lives over the main gateway, up turret-stairs and things. His rooms, very thick walls, etc., struck me as chill. I said I was too tired to go and see the house.

Read Tolstoy's "A Confession". Dined at home with Dorothy. Early bed, after playing Bellini and Bach with Dorothy.

Sunday, July 17th.

Thomas Bodkin came for lunch. He was a great friend of the lately assassinated O'Higgins. Said he was a great man. Said that even if the murderers were caught they could not be tried by a jury because juries would be too frightened by threats of murder to convict them. He said the whole thing was very grave. He was extremely enthusiastic about "The Woman Who Stole Everything".

Tuesday, July 19th.

I went on with "Accident" to-day morning and afternoon, and finished it about 6.30 p.m. I didn't care much for the last 300 words. Total length 67,300 words. I felt gloomy as usual when I had finished it.

George Arliss sent me his own scenario for "Lord Raingo". This is the second one he has done. It has points, but as it stands is really quite useless. So is Edgar Selwyn's.

I drove with Dorothy up to Garrick Club, and she went on to dine at the Morrell's. At the Garrick Freddie Lonsdale gave a dinner to about 15 people, including Harry Preston, Pat Hastings, Bertie Waring, Alan Parsons, Louis Grey, J. Hastings-Turner, Harry Graham, and his (Freddie's) two future sons-

in-law. I wrote great stories

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¹ Publish

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in-law. I was the chief guest. Very merry, this affair. Some great stories. It ended with bridge.

Wednesday, July 20th.

By way of holiday to-day, the day after finishing my novel, I wrote two *Evening Standard* articles, one in the morning and the other in the afternoon. I went for three walks, and my weight in the evening was less than it can have been for very many years. 10 st. 9 lb. 13 oz.

Thursday, July 21st.

I prepared the whole of the copy for my next book of essays (I thought of a title "Gusto" for it, but I doubt if it will do.)¹ This was my second day's work after finishing my novel. Bodkin came for lunch.

Friday, July 22nd.

I wrote the preface to my new book of essays during the morning, despite interruptions. Then I walked quickly to the Reform Club and lunched with Masterman, etc. Masterman was in great form. After lunch his description of the state of things in the East End inspired me to resolve to take politics more seriously in my future articles in *The World To-day* than I had intended.

As I came home on the bus (top), a woman who had climbed up after me said: "I'm on the wrong bus, and I got on to it so that I would travel by the same bus as Arnold Bennett." She was a lady and seemed quite serious. She got off the bus before Hyde Park Corner. I was quite touched. I talked to her a bit.

Tuesday, July 26th.

Lunched at Sybil Colefax's. Rather learned. Balfour, Lewis Malet, Garvin, Julian Huxley. Women: Ruth Draper, Mrs. Garvin, Lady Edward Grosvenor. More men than women. I sat between Ruth and Mrs. Garvin. I talked to Ruth about the critical work she might do on men. She wanted ideas for this. Mrs. Garvin talked to me about "The Price of Love", for which she has much affection. This pleased me.

Bishop of Liverpool² called to see me at 6 sharp. Wanted

¹ Published as "The Savour of Life".

² Dr. David.

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me to contribute to a series of little books which will be meant to help to show some sort of design, order, divine origin in the world, 5,000 to 10,000 words each. I said I would contribute a booklet if he could suggest to me some subjects which appealed to me. Tall, dark, muscular chap, decided, clear tones and movements. A ready smile at a joke. I liked him. I saw him out.

I then read the first pages of Wells's "Meanwhile", which arrived this morning. Dorothy Massingham came to dinner, and we talked personalities about our friends. I took her to see Lonsdale's "On Approval" at the Fortune Theatre. Not a bad first Act in a very old-fashioned 'smart' way, with some very good jocular lines. In the first entr'acte in came Elizabeth Bibesco and a young man. She said she hoped the first Act was not the best act. I said it would certainly be the best act. She had merely arrived one hour late for the play.

Easton Glebe, near Dunmow, Wednesday, July 27th.

H. G. Wells called for me at 10.6 instead of 10.15 to 10.30 as he had said, and drove me down to Easton to see Jane. First part of the drive in heavy rain. When it cleared up we stopped and had a drink at a pub on the edge of the forest, gin and ginger-beer. We arrived at 12.6. Jane had just got downstairs. She is carried down, and wheeled everywhere; but she walks a few steps. H. G. had said she was better, stronger; but she didn't seem to me to be so. Jane keeps an eye on the house. She had just arranged for the servants' holidays. The following people came in during the afternoon; the Byngs, Mrs. Davies, Lady Warwick (with an astounding hat), Peggy Gibbons (Frank Wells's fiancée) and Lady Mercy Dean, the young mother. Bridge first. Then tennis. Wells joined in both. Nobody for dinner except 1 nurse. H. G. went upstairs to spend 15 minutes with Jane, and then came down, and we talked till 11.10. At the end he made tea for himself. We discussed his wife, his servants, his sons. He was in favour of me politically running *The World To-day*, and said that whatever I undertook I should succeed in.

Royal Victoria Hotel, St. Leonards, Thursday, July 28th.

I saw Jane Wells in bed before I left Easton Glebe. Left in car for Winchelsea at 2.30. Arrived there 5.10. Tea with Dorothy, nurse and Baby.

Friday, July 29th.
We drove over to Winchelsea beach. "Gallions Road" arrived later. I went off at 12.26.

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Dorothy wrote 700 at 12.26.

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Friday, July 29th.

We drove over to Winchelsea at 11.35. I walked down to Winchelsea beach, and lay on pebbles and read H. M. Tomlinson's "Gallions Reach", which is not good. The rest of the family arrived later in bits. Great trouble over the tent—too flimsy. I went off and read more Tomlinson.

Monday, August 1st.

Dorothy worked on a scenario of "Lord Raingo" in morning. I wrote 700 of *Sunday Pictorial* article. We left for Winchelsea at 12.26.

Wednesday, August 3rd.

Went to see the "Metropolis" film at the Élite Theatre. Sickening sentimentality. Many good effects, spectacular, spoilt by over-insistence. A footling story. No understanding of psychology of either employers or workmen. "Adapted by Channing Pollock." Good God! What captions. Enough to make you give up the ghost. The theatre was very nearly empty.

Thursday, August 4th.

I have spent hours of meditation on my new task of politically editing *The World To-day*. I tried to read Chapman's Homer. Couldn't. Finally I resumed Gibbon.

Friday, August 5th.

I wrote part of an article in the morning for *Evening Standard*. Komisarjevsky and wife came at 12.30. She is Austrian. They talk Russian when alone. She learnt it in nine months. Agreeable and pretty and melancholy. After five hours' acquaintance she told me all sorts of things about the disadvantages of her life in London. "Lost in Kommy", etc. They lunched with us. We drove over to Winchelsea.

We had tea at the Beach Café. Not bad. Sort of lady-waitresses. We asked for salt. The waitress cried: "Salt—whatever for?"

Wednesday, August 10th.

We drove over to Winchelsea at noon. Lunched with the Robert Nicholsons to meet Arthur Symons and wife. We had

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met wife in Paris with the Sutros about 18 months ago. Arthur Symons, a little very pale white-haired man, prim. He is full of reminiscences of French and English authors, especially French. Verlaine and Baudelaire and Villon he considers to be the three greatest French poets,—the rest not comparable. I rather liked him. He is in every way a 'little' man, but with real taste and refinement.

Tuesday, August 16th.

Dinner at 7.40. After which I went out for a walk on the beach at low tide. I got as far as Hastings Pier. Wonderful twilight effects of black figures against grey water and foam, and bits of cold blue sky, etc. Weather calm. Then I listened to the Queen's Hall Concert. A good programme of Schubert, etc. A singer named Heddle Nash had a tremendous success.

Wednesday, August 17th.

I left for Petworth at 10.45. We drove on the way to Midhurst, so as not to be too early for Alf Mason's lunch at his house New Grove. We got there well on time, and he came out to meet us on the gravel. Duff and Diana Cooper came later. Garden afterwards. A pleasing house, built in 3 periods; pre-Tudor, Tudor, and William and Mary. Not much architecturally, except the latest part. At my request Alfred gave me his new book "No other Tiger". First book of his I shall have read since (I think) "The Four Feathers".

Friday, August 19th.

Reading of all the letters I have received from George Sturt. The scene begins in 1895. This is for the introduction which I am to write for his posthumous work. These letters are extremely good, and many of them ought to be printed in full. They made me feel sad, somehow; because I saw in them a reflection in commentary of the history of all my literary life—over thirty years.

Saturday, August 20th.

I read Ostrovsky's play "The Suitors", which Komisarjevsky wants to begin with at the Court Theatre. It is a good, quiet, old-fashioned, and very *Russian* comedy of manners, with all that damned Russian incapacity and financial corruption—

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which we are so sick of in Russian manners. It would have no chance whatever on the London stage. People would wonder what the hell it was all about. Dorothy agreed; in fact she was more severe than me even. So it will be turned down.

Sunday, August 21st.

Bernstein, the 'business man' in Komisarjevsky's and our "Sloane Productions Co., Ltd.", which is to run at the Court Theatre in the autumn, was to have come down for lunch to-day. He arrived—scarcely hoped for—at 3.25, and stayed for tea. He proved to be all right, *sympathique*, young, some artistic perceptions and some artistic blindnesses. Thus he could see *nothing* in "Malbrouck s'en va t'en guerre". Before dinner I read Merezhkowski's "Paul 1st" and decided that it would do for the Court Theatre. To-night I wrote to this effect to both Komisarjevsky and Bernstein. On the other hand, Ostrovsky's "The Suitors" is a hopeless thing for the Court Theatre or any London theatre. I have been very gloomy; I began to be gloomy yesterday. Dorothy pointed out to me that my liver is out of order, and I think it certainly is.

Thursday, August 25th.

Dorothy went to Winchelsea by bus. I walked on the front westwards and watched bowls and thought of the plot of my next story "Under the Hammer",¹ for about 1½ hours.

I finished reading "Coningsby" on Tuesday. It is a sad welter. No construction. Very little cohesion. Too much eloquence. But there are good things in it. It is very rich and varied. The big interview between Monmouth and his grandson Coningsby towards the end, written in a very inflated style, is excellent in force and effectiveness—the convention of it being once granted. Much of the political criticism is good, and much of it very epigrammatic and amusing.

Friday, August 26th.

We left for Wittersham soon after 12. We were 12 minutes late for lunch at the Arthur Symonses, who live at Island Cottage. 'Quaint old place.' Symons very proud of it, and began showing it off at once, garden and all. Mrs. Jowett (K.C.) was there.

It was a lively lunch. Symons pleased me by referring most

¹ Published in "The Night Visitor".

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enthusiastically to my old *Yellow Book* story, "A Letter Home". He said it was equal to de Maupassant. And so on.

Saturday, August 27th.

I thought fruitfully about my story "Under the Hammer" for 90 minutes in the morning. We then went over to Winchelsea, and lunched. Nichols was in and out most of the day.

Sunday, August 28th.

I meant to begin my short story "Under the Hammer" in the afternoon. Then I finished the Masterman thriller, and I couldn't concentrate on my own story, so I wrote an *Evening Standard* article on thrillers, etc.

Monday, August 29th.

During the afternoon and evening I was much held by Julien Green's "Adrienne Mesurat". This is a very fine novel—but I've read only half of it yet. It is the most 'holding' French novel that I've read for years.

Wednesday, August 31st.

At 5 or so we drove into Goodwood Park and had tea at a sort of rendezvous with the famous "Shell House" near by; the last is good. I spoke to Lady Diana about her playing at the Court Theatre.

Friday, September 2nd.

I wrote 1,100 words of "Under the Hammer" in 1½ hours. Great going.

Considering I only slept 2 hours last night I was in astonishing creative form to-day.

75, Cadogan Square, Sunday, September 4th.

We left St. Leonards at 2.18, and did the first 50 miles in 90 minutes, which was some going.

We had an appointment with Komisarjevsky and Bernstein here at 7 p.m. We decided that the 2nd production at the Court Theatre should be "Mr. Prohack", subject to Golding Bright's approval on behalf of Knoblock. Komi and Bernstein only left at 8.20 when Dorothy happily turned them out.

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Monday, September 5th.

Shortly after 6 I began on the book proofs of "The Vanguard", and worked on them for $1\frac{3}{4}$ hours. Dorothy and I dined at Beaverbrook's office.

Thursday, September 8th.

Dorothy and the Swinnertons for lunch, and we settled our course of conduct—I mean F. S. and me,—to be followed when Doran at last wrote to us to say that he had sold his business to Doubledays.

Harriet Cohen came for tea—hadn't seen her for months. I had to leave her, and Dorothy had to leave her to see the actor Charles Laughton, whom I had to pass as a possible "Prohack". He passed with honours in about five minutes.

S.S. "Deutschland", English Channel, Friday, September 9th.

The excursion party consists of Beaverbrook, Venetia Montagu, Castlerosse, Diana Cooper, and me. Train punctual. Arrived at quay at 6.15. Found we had to go down to the Solent in a tender to join the *Deutschland*. Tender very slow in starting. And, having arrived in the Solent, had to wait about an hour for the *Deutschland* to turn up. The *Deutschland* is only a 20,000-ton ship, but looked enormous, endless, as we boarded her about 8.30 p.m.

S.S. "Deutschland", off Flemish and German coasts, Saturday, September 10th.

Sailing all day. Never saw any land worth talking about. Ship not very interesting. Music three times a day. Dance at night. I read some of Mottram's "Our Mr. Dormer". Good. Also the last pages of "Le Temps Retrouvé"; I got ideas for an article thereupon; they came to me. Otherwise I purposely kept off all cerebration.

Hotel Adlon, Berlin, Sunday, September 11th.

Up at 5.30. Breakfast at 6.5. Left ship *Deutschland* at Cuxhaven about 7. No trouble with customs. Arrived at Berlin 4.40. Kommer was there. In fact he is staying here. Walk along Wilhelmstrasse. Rendezvous at bar with Diana and Kommer and Venetia Montagu at 7.30. Cocktail. Sandwich.

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Then to Grosses Schauspielhaus to see German spectacular trans-
mogrification of "The Mikado", by Challer. Then, after 75
minutes of this, to a restaurant to dine.

Monday, September 12th.

At my request, before dinner, Max gave a full account of the
rise of Baldwin. I wanted this for my first political article. It
was a marvellous narrative, and full of meat for me. All of us
were enthralled. I wrote part of it in shorthand as he talked
and more afterwards before dinner. Thus although we were not
timed to leave the hotel for dinner till 9 p.m. we were still later
—twenty minutes late.

Dined at a good restaurant in a suburb. I heard neither name
nor place. Fine boulevards and plenty of electric signs here
and there of restaurants, etc., etc. At 11.45 we set off to get
hold of Sinclair Lewis (who had called at the hotel during day)
so that he and Castlerosse and perhaps all of us might go and
see night life. However, Sinclair's fiancée, Dorothy Thompson,
correspondent of a Philadelphia paper, had a small party.

Tuesday, September 13th.

In morning, I went out with Kommer to Charlottenburg to
buy books and things. I bought a few German books and some
good coloured reproductions of Cézanne, Seurat, etc., very cheap.
Lunch with Castlerosse, Sinclair Lewis, Bartch (a director) of
Ufa, and three American journalists—all very agreeable. No
time for sleep. We went at 4 to Potsdam to see Sans Souci.
Fine avenues thither, speed-roads, etc. Back at 6.25. The girls,
Kommer and I went to 'Piscator's' communistic play "Hoppla
wir leben" at the Rollenplatz Theatre.

Wednesday, September 14th.

Broken but good night. Didn't definitely awake till 9 a.m.
Weyland (secretary) came in at 10.35, before I had begun to dress
to say that Max had been after all forced to go to see the Ullstein
establishment, and would I go with him at 11. I dressed in
25 minutes and went. We all went. 20 minutes' drive from the
Adlon. Huge place. Finished this year. The visit to the Ufa
establishment was dished at the last moment by Max having a
sore throat and going to bed till dinner-time. Tea with Kommer
and Venetia at the chic tea-place. The girls, Kommer and I

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went to the opera at 7 p.m. "Tristan". Frida Leider was superb as Isolde. Good orchestra. Kommer and Diana left at 8.20 to see Reinhardt.

Train between Berlin and Cuxhaven, Thursday, September 15th.
Nothing in morning except a walk in Unter den Linden and Leipzigerstrasse with Castlerosse.

The Ufa people sent a car and a representative to take us to the Ufa studios, and the excursion took place which ought to have taken place yesterday. Drive of 38 minutes. We saw two films being done simultaneously. Back at 5.10.

Hamburg-Amerika Liner "New York", Friday, September 16th.
We arrived at Cuxhaven only a few minutes late, and were on board the *New York* at about 11.30. This is a less uglily decorated ship than the *Deutschland*, and being a bit later, has a few new contraptions. Thus in the cabins there is wireless.

I am now near the end of Mottram's "Our Mr. Dormer". It is a good book.

75 Cadogan Square, Wednesday, September 21st.
Trying to begin my first article for *The World To-day*, but unable really to make up my mind to start. Nervousness, I suppose. I have most of the required ideas, however. I went out for a walk instead of working. And afterwards instead of working I read a "Thesis" on myself, and the paper.

Thursday, September 22nd.
This morning came a cable from Doran announcing his amalgamation with Doubleday Page & Co. Swinnerton and I had been wondering how he would break this news to us (seeing that he had always sworn such a thing was absolutely out of the question), and his cable solution is characteristically clever. To Apollo Theatre to see Strindberg's "The Father". Met Nelson Keys there, who said he was still looking for a play and was going to America to look for one. Very disappointed with "The Father". It is the work of a madman, inconsequent, loose, too quick, too slow, sort of shaking all the time.

Sunday, September 25th.
We drove down to Easton Glebe to see Jane Wells. Frank

JOURNAL OF ARNOLD BENNETT

Wells was there with fiancée Peggy, and Gyp with wife Marjorie. Jane was too ill to come down or to see anyone. H. G. was visibly very much upset indeed. The Hugh Byngs came to lunch too. I think H. G. likes a lot of people to distract him. We played a bit of ball game in the barn, but not H. G. nor Marjorie. Basil Dean and Lady Mercy¹ called in about 3.30. I read most of Jack's "The New Germany" in the afternoon and evening. Still going on with Gibbon.

Tuesday, September 27th.

Mrs. Patrick Campbell and Komisarjevsky came for lunch—in order to meet each other. Komi said very little. Stella talked tremendously, and very well. Her ideas are exceedingly sound, and in spite of all that I have heard about her naughtiness, she seems to me to be fundamentally good-natured. She said more than once that she was unpleasant, whereas Dorothy was by nature courteous. These two like one another. Then I went over to the theatre to see a rehearsal, having previously learnt—but only by my own enquiries—that the directors' meeting supposed to be arranged for to-night had not been arranged at all. I was rather glad, as this would give me an extra 90 minutes at least for my work. I stayed at the rehearsal till after 5, hearing Mrs. Pat's excellent criticisms.

Friday, September 30th.

Chores. Walked up to Piccadilly Circus, in sunshine, thinking about my short story and getting a few ideas.

I went to the first dress rehearsal. It started an hour later. At 6.25 the last act was only just begun. I got home at 6.30. Dorothy came in soon after. Dined at home. We went to the Gate Theatre (held at the Ettlinger Theatre temporarily). 1st night of Paul Green's "The Field God". Dorothy left after second act. I stayed till just before the last scene began. Farmhouse stuff. Goodish dialogue but not *really* true. Anyhow a change from the West End drawing-room stuff. It had moments of truth. But the thing is really nothing but a chronicle play. No genuine construction or artifice. Just a tale. Nicely produced. I rather liked the light being centred on the middle of the stage. So that people walking along down

¹ His wife, *née* Lady Mercy Greville, dau. of the 5th Earl of Warwick.

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stage showed only like black silhouettes. But this of course was quite as untrue to life as any other form of lighting.

Tuesday, October 4th.

I went to a rehearsal of "Paul I" in the morning after a walk in Battersea Park.

Court Theatre crowded.¹ Good performance. Only fair reception. George Hayes, Charles Laughton and Dorothy all admirable. Reception in Dorothy's dressing-room afterwards.

Friday, October 7th.

In morning I corrected and revised and cut Act I of "Mr. Prohack" and in the afternoon I did the same to Act II.

Then we went to Bauer Concert at Wigmore Hall. It was simply magnificent.

Sunday, October 9th.

I walked $2\frac{3}{4}$ miles in Battersea in the morning—lovely morning—and saw the aviary, which is rather poor, and then came home and began on Act III of "Mr. Prohack". After lunch I attacked Act III again. I must have done three hours of really concentrated work on it during the day. I was very tired.

Monday, October 10th.

I finished the revision of Act III of "Mr. Prohack" before lunch, after a walk in the Park. As a fact it needed less work on it than I had feared. I then had to go at once to Jane Wells's funeral. Lots of people there, and only one man in full mourning. The Wells family and wives were not in mourning. Shaw had an amber handkerchief and no overcoat. Number of really A.I. people present, very small; which shows how Wells kept out of the 'great' world and how the great world is not practically interested in Wells. T. E. Page read the funeral oration (written by H. G. himself) very well. This oration was either not well done, or too well done.

Tuesday, October 11th.

Chores. I took no walk in the morning; but by 12.30 I had finished correcting my revision of Act III of "Mr. Prohack". I then attended part of a rehearsal of the play. Charles

¹ The first night of "Paul I".

JOURNAL OF ARNOLD BENNETT

Laughton very fine as Mr. P. and Lydia Sherwood good as Sissie.

I went to the Albert Hall, as guest of the Cochrans, to hear Chaliapin in Rimsky's "Mozart and Salieri" and in the new scene in "Boris". The first is not very interesting. Chaliapin was tremendous and lovely as the monk in "Boris". I met Ramsay MacDonald in the corridor, and was introduced to him by a man on the *Daily Herald* who only knew me by sight. I wonder what he will think when he reads my remarks on him in *The World To-day*.

I walked both to and from the Albert Hall. When I got home I found A. J. Munnings here. He is an old friend of Dorothy's. A decent, chatty fellow. He said that Dorothy's brother¹ is the finest landscape painter in England and that a few people know it. At which Dorothy was justifiably much pleased.

Friday, October 14th.

Rehearsal of "Mr. Prohack" in morning. I lunched at home, having had little exercise. Then after a sleep I returned to the theatre for another rehearsal, till after 5 p.m. Then reading. I do not read enough, and have far too many books which ought to be read but aren't.

Saturday, October 15th.

Madame Komisarjevsky was to arrive at 3.30 to play duets with me. I was fully awake at 3, and so I thought I would just begin my next week's *Evening Standard* article. She came at 4.15. By that time I had nearly finished my article. We played Haydn and Schubert. She read very well, and said that she had never had a lesson in her life. She said that Englishmen were not interesting. I contradicted her, and offered to show her lots of interesting Englishmen. She said she much wanted to see them.

On the first full week of "Paul I" we have paid off £150 towards production expenses. This is very good, for a thoroughly gloomy play.

I finished my *Evening Standard* article before dinner, all by utilising spare moments. This is the secret of doing more work than you can in the time at your disposal.

¹ C. S. Cheston, artist and etcher, member of New English Art Club.

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OCTOBER 14-OCTOBER 24, 1927

Monday, October 17th.

Rehearsal of "Prohack" at Court at 11. Nearly everybody late. However, I saw the 1st part of Act III gone through for the first time, and decided that, with cutting, it would do very well indeed. Komisarjevsky came for tea, and we went through Act III except the end; all right except cutting. But he wanted a change of construction in Act II, which rather troubled me.

Dinner given by his friends to Harry Preston at the Piccadilly Hotel. I sat between Cochran and Lucas, with Sickert next to Lucas. Dewar was the star orator, and far from as good as usual. Harry P. made a perfect speech in reply. This dinner was organised by Lord Decies.

Queen's Hotel, Manchester, Wednesday, October 19th.

Came to Manchester by 11.50 a.m. arriving at 3.40 for performance of "Flora" at Rusholme.

The *Manchester Guardian* man came to the hotel, and I gave him tea. Then he took me out to see architecture. Damned little to see. I got a car to drive to Rusholme. Theatre full except two back rows. Theatre quite decent, considering that it was once the stable of the Tramway Company (in horse days). I was pleased on the whole with the play. It certainly has holding power, and this power survived even the acting.

Thursday, October 20th.

I took the 12.5 back to London, which went through the Potteries. The sight of this district gave me a shudder.

Sunday, October 23rd.

Went 2½ mile walk in Battersea Park to find ideas for short story "The Wind".¹ I found them. I wrote 800 words of "The Wind", read various things, went for a short walk, had tea alone, and played on the floor with the infant in the nursery.

Monday, October 24th.

Three-and-a-half-mile walk in morning. Then, beginning at 11.15, 1,000 words of "The Wind". Lydia Sherwood (in the cast of "Mr. Prohack") came for lunch and was most agreeable. She had been out shopping with Dorothy for theatre clothes.

¹ Short story reprinted in "The Night Visitor".

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Sleep, after they had gone. I then went over to the rehearsal for a bit. Dorothy had got me the script of Act II. After tea I re-wrote, in the form desired by Komi and Dorothy, the beginning of the act. It was posted to Komi at night.

Tuesday, October 25th.

To first night of Coward's "Home Chat". Not good; but Noel's best play up-to-date. I told him so. I then called for Dorothy at Court Theatre, and we went to Syrie Maugham's party in honour of Noel's first night. Many people. A very good party.

Thursday, October 27th.

I went to South Kensington Museum to think, and I thought. Then I wrote the penultimate section of my story "The Wind" in about an hour. I dined with Geoffrey Russell at the Reform, and we went to the Lerner concert together at Queen's Hall. Fine concert. All Mozart. I thought that exclusive Mozart would be trying, but it wasn't.

Monday, October 31st.

I wrote the Russian part of my next *World To-day* article, so that it might be vetted by a lawyer as being 'safe' from the Official Secrets Act. Then I drove to the Court Theatre and assisted at a rehearsal of "Prohack" for an hour. At 2.30 I flew over to Sybil Colefax's at her special request, to show me to Granville Barker and wife. G. B. has become prim. I got across him on the subject of a French play "Maya", which he liked and I did not.

Wednesday, November 2nd.

Corrected proofs of "Mr. Prohack" for volume form. Dined with Dorothy at home. After dinner I stayed at home, finished the proofs of "Prohack", finished reading J. J. Bernard's play "L'Amé en Peine", and wrote a 300-word note on it for the Stage Society's programme. Not a very good play, but not without interest.

Saturday, November 5th.

I took Dorothy to the Court Theatre, and went off to hear Poushinnoff give the last of his six pianoforte recitals of Chopin.

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OCTOBER 25-NOVEMBER 17, 1927

Quite a good audience. What fame—Chopin's—to stand six consecutive evenings after 100 years!

Friday, November 11th.

I walked out and 'saw' the Two Minutes Silence from inside the lobby of the Court Theatre. When I saw old gents standing two minutes in that perishing wind, hatless, I was glad I'd come inside. Rehearsal of "Prohack" 11.10 to 1.15. Then rush to Bernard Shaw's to lunch at their new flat in Whitehall Court, to meet Trebitsch the original author of "Jitta's Atone-ment". Trebitsch, who pleased me, was pleased with Dorothy for Jitta. The St. John Ervines also present. All very agreeable.

Wednesday, November 16th.

I dressed, and went off to entertain Major and Mrs. Whittall at the Yacht Club. It is a fact that between 8.15 and 10.15 or 10.20 I never once remembered that the first performance of "Mr. Prohack" was going on at the Court Theatre. The Whittalls left about 10.35. I smoked a cigarette, after a cigar, and then drove down to the theatre. The curtain had just fallen. It kept going up again while I was in the wings or near the wings. Much satisfaction in the wings, on the staircases and in the dressing-rooms. Charles Laughton very pleased with himself, as he had the right to be, seeing he had had a great triumph. Everybody who 'came round' professed the greatest enjoyment of the play. I almost believed in a success. Especially as, going into the theatre, I saw Komisarjevsky outside in the dark entry. I said: "Is it all right?" He said: "Oh yes, it's all right." Dorothy said she had not played very well, but she was not depressed.

She said: "You and I are great adventurers."

Thursday, November 17th.

I read all the morning press notices of "Prohack" at breakfast. *Express* good. Most of the others gently praising, tepid. *The Times* most depreciatory. Board Meeting of Sloane Productions, Ltd., at 2.30. Bernstein, who had not liked the play when he read it, was really very enthusiastic about it in performance. Dorothy had bought the afternoon papers, all of which were encomiastic.

JOURNAL OF ARNOLD BENNETT

I escorted D. to the theatre, came back home, which felt empty, and drove by taxi to the Reform Club, and met Geoffrey Russell on the steps as I was entering. He said I was going with him to hear Liszt's Faust Symphony at the Philharmonic concert. So I went. Heard the last movements of a Brahms pianoforte concerto played by Arthur Schnabel. He is a very fine player.

I got back to the Court Theatre before the performance was over, and heard the end of the play from the Royal Box with Whitaker, the manager. The public laughter was very reassuring, and I felt more optimistic about the future of the play.

In the afternoon I had written a character sketch of Masterman¹, the news of whose death I had had in the morning.

Friday, November 18th.

I walked up to the National Gallery, partly to think up an idea for a story, and partly to find Poussin pictures on classical subjects which I could use for illustrating my book of Greek travel. I met Burton Chadwick, Osbert Sitwell, and Noel Coward en route.

Monday, November 21st.

Disturbed night; dreamed much. I seldom dream. I did some work to-day for a change. I began my new short story at 10.30 after a walk, and wrote 600 words of it in about an hour. I then set off in the rain to St. Margaret's for the funeral service of Charles Masterman. A lot of people there. Ll. George following the coffin. I didn't like the sight of him there. At 9 I was at Mrs. Masterman's discussing her affairs with her. I promised to set on foot a scheme for collecting £4,000 for education of the three children, all of whom I saw.

Tuesday, November 22nd.

I wrote another 500 words of short story, and then wrote six letters to friends of mine and the late Masterman about a fund for the education of his children. This took some time. I walked then to Embassy Club, and lunched with Harry Preston. Pat Thompson was the only other guest. They wanted advice from me as to how Pat's help to Harry in the writing of his book of reminiscences could best be acknowledged. I turned

¹ The Rt. Hon. Charles F. G. Masterman.

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NOVEMBER 18-NOVEMBER 27, 1927

down their own scheme and gave them a new one, which they heartily accepted.

Thence with Sidney Bernstein to the Wardour Films private theatre to see a German film about health-culture, as cut by the Film Society. I am to arbitrate between the Film Society and Wardour about their respective versions of this film. I am to see the Wardour (fuller version) next Tuesday. Dorothy and I and Marjorie Gordon dined at Queen's Restaurant, and I took Marjorie on to the opening of the new Gate Theatre in Villiers Street. An English version of the French prostitute play "Maya" played by prim English actresses with 'Varsity and Kensingtonian accents.

Thursday, November 24th.

Went to the Savoy for "The Other Club" dinner, 15 minutes late. Alfred Mason in the chair. I sat near to Lutyens, Jos Wedgwood, Hamar Greenwood, Birkenhead, William Berry and Anthony Hope. I had some sparring with Birkenhead, rather loud and abusive, but good-natured. However I could be just as abusive as he could.

Friday, November 25th.

I went to the Reform Club to dine. I there met Raymond Mortimer and Francis Birrell, who were going to second night of Coward's "Sirocco". So I said I would go. I did go. Goodish 1st Act. Putrid 2nd. And trying and hysterical 3rd. On the whole a trying evening. I drove home with Birrell, and waited in bed for Dorothy to return.

Sunday, November 27th.

We lunched at Norman Wilkinson's. He lives alone at Strawberry House, Chiswick Mall. Very nice and tasteful. Several old harpsichords and similar instruments, in perfect order, on which he plays nicely. He is charming, sensible, and has taste.

We dined at the Ivy, and saw there the St. John Ervines, Hutchinsons, Lytton Strachey, the Basil Deans, etc., etc. Then to first night of the Sitwell entertainment, "First Class Passengers Only", at the Arts Theatre Club. Packed. Some part amusing. More parts tedious. Some fine acting. Some rotten. It was a sort of Revue in backchat.

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Monday, November 28th.

Doran, Jules Godby, Ellery Sedgwick and daughter Henrietta, Humbert Wolfe and Mrs. Belloc Lowndes came to tea and baby. Baby and gramophone do nothing whatever to promote high-brow conversation.

I dined at the Piccadilly Hotel restaurant with Harry Preston, to meet the Prince of Wales. Very affable. Then to National Sporting Club, to see Moody beat Moore. A goodish fight. I called for Dorothy at the theatre.

Thursday, December 1st.

Lady Beaverbrook died at 5 a.m. to-day. This was a damned shame. I say no more. Dorothy said that between 3 and 4 a.m. when she couldn't sleep, she was full of the idea of death. Although I had had a good night's sleep I couldn't work.

Saturday, December 3rd.

I decided at early morn to go to Gladys Beaverbrook's funeral to-day. I drove off in the car at 1.40, and got to Mickleham, scene of the funeral, at 2.25. So I drove on to Dorking and through Dorking and came back, the car having taken a wrong turning, just as the hearse and procession was arriving at the lych-gate of the churchyard. I went in and Castlerosse joined me, and I saw Baxter, Blumenfeld, James Dunn, Raymond Thompson, and a whole lot of Max's secretaries, clerks, etc., etc. The entrance of the coffin, covered with really magnificent wreaths, was moving. Max was leaning on young Max's arm, and looked quite old. Chopin's funeral march—not equal to Handel's. "Abide With Me" at the end. This hymn is quite a good poem. Then the coffin goes out again, and a scene of terrible damp cold at the graveside, and our hats off, and Lord Ashfield only just up that day from a chill. These funeral rites in an English winter are absolutely barbaric. I met Max at the gate, and was so moved, unknown to myself till the moment came, that I could not speak to him.

Sunday, December 4th.

I had written my *Evening Standard* article by 11.10. I then went out for a walk in darkness and mist.

We walked to the Albert Hall for the Furtwangler concert.

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NOVEMBER 28-DECEMBER 11, 1927

Fine concert, marvellous band and conductor, with an unsatisfactory programme.

Dined at the Savoy in the Pinafore Room. George Doran's party: Colefaxes, Noel Coward, Joan Sutherland, Ethel Mannin, Humbert Wolfe, O. Sitwell (sardonic), Rebecca West, Clemence Dane (highly ingenious). Fine dinner. I was too tired and gloomy to enjoy it much. We didn't leave till 11.45.

Tuesday, December 6th.

I attended the dinner of the P.E.N. club to Lion Feuchtwanger, and sat next to him, and was pleased with his personality. He is evidently well-used to publicity. He said that his Berlin secretary said that he spent one hour in writing and the rest of the day in business, making contracts, and seeing people. Rebecca West was in the chair, and she didn't say enough. Feuchtwanger spoke very satisfactorily in very bad English. I went over and talked to May Sinclair, whom I hadn't seen for sixteen or seventeen years. I also went over to Mrs. Aria. She said: "You haven't kissed me." So I kissed her—for the first time.

Thursday, December 8th.

Feuchtwanger came for tea at 4.40. Also Hugh Walpole. Dorothy came in at 4.45 from her matinée. Feuchtwanger looks just like a cat. He talked about himself almost the whole time. But Dorothy, when she came, put him on to the subject of me, and kept him there. He is certainly very intelligent.

Saturday, December 10th.

Rotten night. No work. I went to a demonstration of "Music from the Ether" at noon at the Savoy Hotel under direction of Charlie Cochran, Edwin Evans being the lecturer. Lots of notorieties. Rather good. Then lunch at the Shaws, to meet Feuchtwanger again. St. John Ervine and Dorothy the other guests. Shaw has flashes, but not many. Charlotte Shaw is quiet and sweet. Ervine is fine company. Feuchtwanger was agreeable and intelligent, with a sense of humour.

Sunday, December 11th.

Mrs. P. Campbell came for tea at 5.30 and made a terrific out-

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pouring. She said: "If you want to keep me quiet give me a cigar." So I gave her one. Later, she went out into the Square smoking it. Her energy seems quite unimpaired. She now wants to produce and play in "Flora". She arrived with a great scheme all complete. She read the play about a year ago or more, and saw nothing in it. Now she reads it again and sees everything in it. I discussed a few things with her and left the rest to Pinkers.

I finished "Monte Cristo" at 11.30. On the whole this is a wonderful book. The end is too hurried, especially considering the immense leisureliness of all that precedes it. Many explanations are lacking.

Thursday, December 15th.

Cecil Roberts came for tea, simply for gossip and to talk about himself, and had the damned cheek to stay for 95 minutes.

Grand dinner and presentation of portrait (by Clive Gardiner) to Dr. T. E. Page. 30 people. The dinner was offered to the company by Tudor Walters, who was in the chair. Old Sir Walter Runciman sang two or three sea-chanties. Over 80. Also the French chef was called in, and complimented, and asked to sing a verse of the Marseillaise; which he did.

Wednesday, December 21st.

Nothing doing this morning with my short story. So that before breakfast I had already come to the decision that I would leave it for to-day, and write my next week's *Evening Standard* article instead. Which I did. Then at 3.30 Saville, together with a scenario writer, came to discuss a scenario for "The Pretty Lady". I made it absolutely clear that Christine must remain absolutely a prostitute.

Tuesday, December 27th.

Bad night. Enfeebled. Forty minutes' talk with Dorothy about the fortunes of "Mr. Prohack". Then I walked in snowy Battersea Park. At 12.15 I sat down to draft a letter to authors urging them to subscribe to the National Book Council. It is suggested that this appeal should be signed by Hardy, Shaw, Wells, me and two or three others. I shall send it to-morrow to Willie Maxwell for his consideration.

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DECEMBER 15-DECEMBER 31, 1927

Thursday, December 29th.

Splendid health. I have now cut my breakfast down to four or five kinds of fruit (raisins, orange, apple, lemon and prunes) plus two cups of tea and two pieces of rye-bread. And little or no meat for lunch. After chores, I saw Dorothy, apropos chiefly of a cable from Estelle Winwood asking for American rights of "Flora". I then walked along the Embankment to the next bridge West and down along King's Road, and then wrote 750 words of my "Millionaire" article in $1\frac{1}{4}$ hours at most. Then by bus to Piccadilly. Lunch at Reform Club with Gardiner and Tudor Walters. I like Tudor more and more. Sir John Brunner and Vivian Phillipps joined us in the smoking-room. Talk about our own defects, and about the characters of politicians. I came to the conclusion that what Liberal statesmen lacked is courage. This applies to Walter Runciman, Herbert Samuel, and Asquith, and John Burns.

Friday, December 30th.

We went to lunch with Ruth Draper who has a little house in Charles Street, belonging to an American named Chubb. Present: the Alan Herberts, and Mrs. Phipps, sister of Lady Astor. She was full of Bernard Shaw's conversational liveliness. She is very lively herself and I liked her. Ruth Draper again talked to me about writing a play for her, and I promised to write to her about such a play.

I have now cleared up all the work I have to do this year. In actual production it has not been quite as large as last year, but it has been quite large enough. And the financial results have been the best for many years; also the financial prospects for next year are good.

Saturday, December 31st.

Goodish night.

I have now got my weight down again. So long as it keeps at 11 or under I'm content. A month ago it was at 11 st. 2 lb. I walked to the Army and Navy and back to get some clean pocket note-books. I got six—*id.* each.

I read in Sartor's "Introduction to the History of Science", Vol. 1, and decided to write an article on it for the *Evening Standard*. At 10.40 I went off to the Gargoyle Club, where we

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entertained A. P. Herbert and wife at supper. I drove up there in snow and sleet. We danced but little. I was in bed at 2.35 and slept in all nearly six hours, which was an excellent introduction to the New Year, considering that I had eaten a quite hearty supper and drunk quite enough champagne—preceded by a cocktail.

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Sunday, January 1st.

After dinner we played bits and pieces out of "The Meistersingers". This began at 10 o'clock, just when I was thinking of going to bed. So that we didn't go upstairs till 11 p.m. Then I began to analyse myself for Dorothy's distraction. She was very interested, said I didn't do half enough of it. Lastly I read myself to sleep with "Peter Simple". Yes, it is very good, but it seems to be all the same—the old Picaresque stuff. Oddly, Marryat brings in another quite long story told by another young naval officer to Peter, about his life, a few years earlier. There is no contrast between the two. Just an idea that occurred to the author, I suppose, when he was hard up for an idea.

I have made only one good resolution: to write more legibly.

When I met Barry Jackson this morning on the Embankment in the snow, he was wearing snow-boots, as I was, but no overcoat. "Ah!" he said, pointing to my boots, "we're the same." He is the blandest person I ever met, I think. A sort of veiled voice—*voix blanche*. He said how well I looked. I said how well *he* looked. "That's my glass of orange juice," said he, beaming. He did look very well. He admitted that he had not of late been losing money in the theatre. Even after deducting the losses of his various failures, Phillpotts's two great successes showed him a profit. About his forthcoming production of "Macbeth" in modern clothes, he said he was afraid it would, so, prove too *grim* for modern audiences. He said he was having the greatest difficulty in getting a Macbeth.

Monday, January 2nd.

I took Mrs. Masterman to dine at Sovrani's new restaurant in Jermyn Street. Lucy Masterman told me a lot about Charles, their children, and the Asquiths. She has a pleasingly sardonic

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yet affectionate tongue. She said to me once again: "Charles always said: 'If you're really in a hole, go to A. B. He's the one.'"

Thursday, January 5th.

I corrected typescripts for one hour, and then walked up to Piccadilly Circus and back, thinking further over my scheme for a play for Ruth Draper. I got this scheme into order, and wrote to Ruth about it immediately after lunch. I find I can think best when I am in a street of shops, now. I like more and more looking at shop-windows. Could not get decent rest owing to the noise of workmen next door. I arose, and did a further instalment of my *World To-day* article, about the Riviera, writing it with zest and ferocity.

I read a lot of "Peter Simple". It has apparently no form, but it is very good indeed otherwise. It does give a picture of naval life, and its moral backbone is excellent. I was very gloomy this morning, reflecting that life ought to be give and take, but that I gave without taking. However, at night I was cheerful again. Odd!

Friday, January 6th.

The core of the morning spent at the barber's, who wanted to see my wireless; so I told him to come along any evening. He is a man of quiet but extreme likes and dislikes. He loathes "jazz". He said he had been to see skate-waltzing on the rink in Grosvenor Road, and how it was the loveliest thing in movement he had ever seen. He said that Jellicoe was there, and Jellicoe had 'passed a remark about how nice it was to see', etc. 'Passed a remark' is a great phrase of his class. I love it.

Walked all along King's Road nearly to World's End, and got a few good ideas for my short story. I also observed the interiors of the scores and scores of small shops. The majority of them had customers within (5.15 to 6 p.m.), more customers on the return journey than on the outward.

Saturday, January 7th.

At Dorothy's urgent request, I went over to the Court Theatre. Atmosphere of the last night of a run, but, although no other theatre has yet been obtained, we trust it is not the last night of the run. Evelyn Cochran came round after the performance,

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and Charles was *really* enthusiastic about the play. He said he hadn't liked a play so much for years. Evelyn said she had never seen Charlie so happy in a theatre. He also liked the acting. It seemed impossible not to believe that this play, in the West End, and *kept* on for a bit, should not develop into a very great success. All the packing up had to be finished in Dorothy's dressing-room. More good-byes. Sally, the dresser, is really a very nice old woman, with a voice as thin as a piece of paper. We got home at midnight. Then searchings in larder for food for Dorothy.

Sunday, January 8th.

Enfeebled, gloomy. I wrote a lot more of my story, and then supplanted the cook in Dorothy's audience chamber, and arranged to go for a walk with her at noon. Part of Grosvenor Road, the interesting part near the Tate Gallery, was barricaded. Crowds of gazers. We went on to Vauxhall Bridge. Nothing to be seen anywhere, except mud on the footpath of Grosvenor Road, and the damp interior of the Riviera Club, which had been flooded out.

Monday, January 9th.

We went to the first night of Barry Jackson's new Court season, "The Adding Machine", by Elmer Rice (American). I feared the worst for this play; but it turned out quite well. It has the misfortune of having two subjects—first one and then another, and it is under-produced. But the writing and satire, and some of the expressionist stuff are quite decent. I enjoyed myself.

Tuesday, January 10th.

I received the big Funk & Wagnall's big standard Dictionary as a gift from F. & W., because I had boomed their smaller dictionary in the *Evening Standard*. On examining it, I found that whereas my name is in the smaller ed., (1922), it is not in the larger edition (1927—but is it really 1927?). I felt hurt. I told Dorothy and her first remark was, eagerly: "And is Wells in both?" I pointed this thing out to F. & W.; but I am not sure if they will appreciate my humour. We went to the Victoria Palace to see "The World's Master Juggler"—Salerno. He was good, but not sublime. Arthur Prince was sublime. Not a

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bad evening. We came home by bus. I am now getting to the end of "Peter Simple". There is a wonderfully sly bit of social satire in this work; comic description of a negro religious meeting in Barbados, followed immediately by a comic letter from an Irish priest. The juxtaposition shows that there is nothing to choose between the nigger parson and the Irish priest.

Wednesday, January 11th.

Ivor Nicholson came for tea at 5.15, and wanted six more articles for Hearsts: but only the English rights thereof. So I refused. I said I would write for 2s. a word and return to Hearsts all I received by selling the articles on my own in U.S.A. He offered me a Hearst luncheon, grand and celebritous, to celebrate my 40th year in London, 1929. I said: "You couldn't give it me."

The *Daily News* rang up to say that Hardy was dead, and would I say something. I wouldn't. But I decided that I must get up early to-morrow, and write a *Standard* article on Hardy to take the place of the one on Gilbert Murray.

Thursday, January 12th.

Rose at 5.50. Began to write an article on the late Hardy at 6, and finished it at 8.30. At 9.5 an *Evening Standard* messenger came to fetch it in a taxi.

Friday, January 13th.

Lunch with Page, Gardiner, Leif Jones, Walter Roch, and Hedley. Afterwards Wallace, Philipps, James O'Connor and others joined us. There was some of the best talking I have heard even at the Reform Club, especially in appraising the characters of John Simon, Herbert Samuel, etc. T. S. Eliot and Humbert Wolfe came for a later tea to discuss with me the future of the *New Criterion*. Their real object was to find out whether I would find capital.

Robert Nichols came in after dinner bearing a book for me from Jacques Blanche. We heard the Symphony Concert on the wireless, and it was very good. Harty conducting. Nichols was in a swearing mood. Nurse was present. He said, of Wagner: "Blast his bloody eyes. I rage against him, but he always gets me."

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Saturday, January 14th.

I walked to the Leicester Galleries and on the way thought of a great idea for a modernised version of "Faust". I mean I thought it out in some detail. I had thought of it yesterday. To-day I ordered a literal translation of Goethe's "Faust".

At Leicester Galleries a show of drawings and lithographs by Matisse. Compared to the price of his paintings the drawings were very low priced. I bought one drawing, 25 guineas, and two lithographs. Also a show of paintings by John Armstrong, which are causing some stir. I wasn't quite startled by their excellence. I had a talk with Armstrong, who was looking quite spick and span in relatively new clothes. He said, in reply to my questions, that he had been chiefly influenced by Carpaccio (a Venetian painting of which he had never seen the original) and Signorelli. Also Picasso.

Monday, January 16th.

I had to lunch early in order to go to Hardy's funeral at Westminster Abbey. It was all done very smoothly and calmly. Music good. South transept not full. In the morning I had written a letter to the *Daily Express* animadverting upon the distribution of tickets for this affair.

John Galsworthy as pall-bearer made a magnificent figure.

Tuesday, January 17th.

Formerly in my life I was always pre-occupied by my insomnia and my digestion. I only rarely think about my digestion now—it is so good—but I am still terribly pre-occupied with my sleeping. I walked to the Metropole for the Dramatists' Club lunch. Pinero in the chair. Quite a muster of members because Pinero had been ill. Coward and Malleson appeared for the first time—new members. Coward said to me: "Don't leave me, Arnold. I feel so strange here. I'm on the verge of hysteria among all these people." He sat on Pinero's right with Barrie next to him.

When Barth was reading the minutes at the end, I said "Bad grammar, I regret to say." The sin was "None . . . were." But Barth couldn't see it, and others couldn't. I think only Barrie saw it. Yet all were authors.

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Wednesday, January 18th.

I wrote a letter to the *Daily Express* and 800 words of my story in the morning, and felt very sensitive afterwards.

Saturday, January 21st.

I walked to South Kensington Museum, and had a look at the British Water Colours, which I had not examined before as a whole. Well, I think that Cotman is the best of them, easily. Peter de Wint I like less than I did. He gets pretty and his colour is often not agreeable. Brabazon, clumsy and groping, is still the most interesting of the moderns. Indeed I couldn't see anybody else who aroused any emotion in me.

After dinner I read a lot of the sixth series of H. L. Mencken's "Prejudices". This fellow is getting better. He has a general basis of common sense, and really writes very well for a journalist. To the Trocadero Grill for the Cabaret show, as the guests of Charles Cochran. Doris Zinkeisen (Mrs. Johnson) and husband, and Tilly Losch (formerly *première danseuse* at the Vienna Opera House) and Mrs. C. B. C. were there. Tilly Losch was very simple and sound and very pretty. She is doing the dances for C. B.'s new Revue. The cabaret show was extremely lively.

I had gone specially to see Hayes, the juggler, of whom I had heard fine accounts. He was very skilled, imaginative, and comic; but his turn was too short. Slept for five hours without a break. It is years since I did this great feat.

Sunday, January 22nd.

I read more of "Faust" and spent a lot of time in loose reflection—vaguely on a new play and on my next *Evening Standard* article. I went for a walk right down over Chelsea Bridge and along Battersea Park Road, and home by Albert Bridge Road, and King's Road home. Then I filled up the time in writing to Phillpotts about Hardy's funeral.

Battersea is a different world. I saw on a *Sunday Express* poster: "Hardy's last novel, by Sir Edmund Gosse." It seemed terribly absurd there. How many people in Battersea Bridge had heard of Hardy, or of Gosse, or could get up any interest whatever in a last novel though it were written by God himself? It is a gloomy drab street, with most repulsive

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tenements, a big technical institute, an open gramophone shop (with a machine grinding out a tune and a song) and an open "Fun Fair" sort of place (a shop with the front taken out) and a few small boys therein amusing themselves with penny-in-the-slot machines. We dined at Mrs. Patrick Campbell's, across the Square.

Tuesday, January 24th.

To the first night of Behrman's (American) "The Second Man" at the Playhouse, in which Noel Coward is playing. Good first act. Noel Coward was admirable. Dorothy learnt from Peacock that Laughton must be either re-engaged or lost to-morrow morning. Much against my wishes, she telephoned to ask for capital. It wasn't capital we wanted for the continuance of "Mr. Prohack," but a small theatre at a reasonable rent.

Wednesday, February 1st.

I went out for a long walk and got really quite a decent few ideas for my play during this walk, which took just under two hours. Lambeth was the most interesting part of it. Had tea at the Express Dairy in King's Road. I always enjoy this place. Total cost: 3d. Dorothy and I dined and danced at the Savoy which is still the best restaurant in London.

The only man I knew was F. B. Characteristically, he got the professional danseuse at his table (two other men with him) in about ten seconds and was immediately dancing with her. This typical London roué looked very grey (in the face) and is showing age. Home at 11. Dorothy's great tragic news was that Eadie had offered her the Royalty Theatre, almost at once, but she couldn't take it now because Charles Laughton had gone. This was really bad luck. Had she known a week earlier she might have gone on with her season and the play.

Thursday, February 2nd.

Rather wearing, visits from relatives whom you scarcely ever see, and whose course of existence is separating more widely from you every year, and has been so doing for over 30 years. It is in fact desolating.

Saturday, February 4th.

Bernard Shaw came for lunch. He and Dorothy talked theatre

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all the time. He said that the first preliminary to her going in for theatrical management and acting was a divorce between us. He was very quiet, chatty, sensible and agreeable. He went up with us to Harriet Cohen's Henry Wood orchestral concert at Wigmore Hall, and by chance had got a seat next to ours. We all enjoyed this concert. The hall was full. I dozed off twice, being very fatigued and sleepy, but still I enjoyed it. We drove home in rain. Shaw left us to get exercise on foot. Dined at the St. John Hutchinsons: Ethel Sands, Roger Fry, and W. Gerhardt. Fry was in great form. His latest notion is that Delacroix, though a great man, was not a great artist.

Tuesday, February 7th.

I was just going out on a secret mission when Dorothy came in so that I had to hurry like anything to my destination, which was in Eaton Place, and even then arrived after Father Vincent McNabb, O.C., had begun his 'spiritual conference' in a West End drawing-room to a pretty full audience in which I was the only man. I liked Father McNabb. He looked about 50. Very refined face and voice. Good enunciation, with unembarrassed pauses for a word or a sentence. Very soft-toned. Rather restless. Subject: Parable of the Vineyard. He said some good things; but his chief effect is that his bearing and mood compel you to think about spiritual values. I was certainly impressed. It was Maurice Baring who told me to go and hear him. Lasted half an hour. Then the Father came down from his low rostrum and passed along the front row, where I was, and I saw that he was much older than I had thought. Everyone remained seated till he had gone. He went out as it were furtively, as if self-conscious. He was in a monk's dress.

I finished "Tess" yesterday. It is really a very impressive masterpiece; and its faults are quite trifling. I was wrong to say in the *Evening Standard* that it is not among Hardy's five best.

Wednesday, February 8th.

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FEBRUARY 7-FEBRUARY 20, 1928

Thursday, February 9th.

I went out for a walk and wrote 1,350 words of a *Sunday Pictorial* article, before lunch. After dinner I read "Desolation", Pauline Smith's new short story. Very fine. And I finished correcting the MS. of my article and of a short story finished some weeks ago: "The Seven Policemen".¹ Not very good.

Hôtel de France et Choiseul, Paris, Sunday, February 12th.

Mary Kennerley came at 12.30. She brought newspapers. Dorothy, Cynthia, Mary and I lunched at Luka's. Very good. Then to Bourdet's "Vient de Paraître" at La Michodière. Excellent. Dorothy and I dined at the Café Cardinal. *Petit bourgeois* surroundings. Then to Godebski's which we reached at 9.35. Met there the Marcel Achards both *très sympathiques*. There was also a young author named Friedrichs, who has written a novel of London called "L'Ange et la Couronne". He was *très bien*.

Monday, February 13th.

To Lucas's Restaurant where we entertained Marcel Achard and wife; Mimi and husband. Alfred Beit also came. The others gradually left but Achard stayed, at my request, and we talked there till nearly 5, and then went into a Russian tea place.

75, Cadogan Square, Friday, February 17th.

I was determined to begin my play this morning, and I did at 11 o'clock, after various chores and a fair night, which did not definitely finish till 8.15 a.m. I wrote just the little preliminary scene with the maidservant, introducing the young male character. It was enough. It gave me a start.

Monday, February 20th.

I walked to the Garrick Club to lunch with Duff Tayler and Knoblock. Knoblock is just back from America, with horrible tales of the noise and the slow traffic of New York, and the harshness and the enterprise of theatrical managers there. We dined at 7.30 and went to Van Druten's "Young Woodley" at the Theatre Arts Club.

All you can say about "Young Woodley", which has been

¹ Reprinted in "The Night Visitor".

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extravagantly praised, is that it is a very good play for a boy of 23 or 24. The construction and movements are clumsy; the theme seems to be in two separate halves; the dialogue is very good indeed. Most of the acting, especially Kathleen O'Regan's and Frank Lawton's, was beautiful. The big scenes were rather moving.

Saturday, February 25th.

I went by bus to Colefaxes; Sam Courtauld and Eliz. Lewis. All of us except Arthur Colefax went to see "The Unknown Warrior" by Raynal at the Little Theatre. First act false and awful, and all the three players, including Maurice Browne, awful. But 2nd and 3rd Acts quite good and rather moving, and Maurice was better—much better. Then Courtauld took us all to the Café de Paris, where we stayed till 12.30 and after. Fearfully crowded and noisy. No room to dance. Lady Colefax and Michael ditto drove me home. Bed at 1 a.m.

Midland Hotel, Manchester, Tuesday, February 28th.

A walk in town with Cochran. First night of "Cochran's 1928 Revue" at 7.30. Packed. Atmosphere of success. Glimpse of stage afterwards. Cochran gave a supper.

Thursday, March 1st.

I dined with Beaverbrook at the Vineyard, Fulham. He has given up his office on the top floor of the *Express* building. Nobody but me and Max. We grew rather intimate again. I stayed till 11.53, and arranged to go down to Cherkley on Sunday for the night.

Friday, March 2nd.

Mildred Temple, Lang's London representative, told me that Pauline Smith's story, "Desolation", was very fine, and she personally loved it, etc., etc., all the usual stuff—it was a little too gloomy for them. I reasoned seriously with her; told her she had spoilt my evening and refused to dance with her.

Wednesday, March 7th.

John Buchan, invited for tea at 4.30, arrived at 4.27. He is a thoroughly organised man. He had a Committee Meeting for 5.30. And at 5.15 he simply got up and left. I then,

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FEBRUARY 25-APRIL 11, 1928

fatigued somehow—but not by Buchan, who is most brisk—rested a bit, and then took up the play again, and reeled it off with strange ease.

Saturday, March 10th.

I went out for a walk in order to get ideas, found that I had them already, and came back at once accordingly, and started on the new scene in Act II and wrote 500 words of it in about 80 minutes.

George Doran came to lunch, and after lunch in my study he began talking about the idea he had given me last year for a novel based on the tragic life of Ernest Hodder-Williams. I said I liked it, but couldn't handle it yet, as I was more attracted by a scheme for a realistic novel about a big luxury hotel.¹ I shall probably begin it as soon as I have finished my play.

Wednesday, March 14th.

Went to see Chaplin's film "The Circus" at the New Gallery, where I joined a party. Fairly good film: a few fine moments in it, really funny, and some dull parts; the end had pathos with distinction. Then all of us in three or four cabs to Sybil Colefax's for supper. A lot of stage nobs came in: Coward, Du Maurier, Leslie Faber, Oliver Messel. Wells came. Victor Beigel sang Viennese popular songs superbly; Noel Coward sang his own songs extremely cleverly. Viola Tree and Oliver Messel gave side-splitting imitations, and I concluded the programme.

Wednesday, April 4th.

We lunched with Marie Tempest and Graham Browne in Regent's Park. A charmingly arranged house. Marie is still surprisingly young in looks and gestures; but she talks old—about *to-day*, "*modern*", "*there's nothing*"—etc., etc. I offered her my play "*Flora*".

Heard some of Elgar's "Dream of Gerontius" afterwards and I didn't think very highly of it.

Wednesday, April 11th.

During the holiday [at Sidmouth] I read all the 520 pages of

¹ "Imperial Palace."

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"The Moonstone". It is a very good detective novel, one of the best. It holds you throughout, and it has some fun in it. The method of narration—personal narration—is unsatisfactory, because all the narratives are so obviously written by Wilkie Collins. A few failures in *vraisemblance*—e.g., how could an officer of the police force be *paid* for his services by a private person (Lady Verinder)? Still, a good book, though entirely *terre-à-terre*. Collins has some good observations about life, and some hard things to say about women. One narrator says: "Women have no principles." This is misleading but true. He ought to have said "general principles". To which he might retort that every principle, by the very nature of it, is "general".

Walked up Sloane Street. Meant to walk to National Gallery, but took a bus at Knightsbridge. I got to the N.G. at 11.30. I chose the Ansidei Room, and looked for 20 minutes at the "Coronation of the Virgin" by Orcagna, and the ditto by Gaddi. Also the "Immaculate Conception" by Cuvelli. All these pictures are more interesting to me than the Ansidei Madonna of Raphael. They lifted up the plane of my thought of my play (Act III) and I got a few notions.

Thursday, April 12th.

Bad night. Thorpe, of British International Films, and Dupont, the German producer of "Vaudeville" and "Moulin Rouge", came to see me about writing a film story about Piccadilly, under the title "Piccadilly", for Dupont to produce; I agreed to write, and promised the first sketch for Tuesday.

We dined at 7.35 and went to "The Man with Red Hair", with Charles Laughton in it. We arranged beforehand that I should leave after the second act in order to go to bed early. So I did, though with reluctance, because the 2nd Act interested me, and I had a desire to see the 3rd.

Friday, April 13th.

I got away early, and began to think about my Dupont Film "Piccadilly." Then I walked to Dent's in Cockspur Street, where yesterday I had seen a bed-table watch, which I had the notion of giving to Dorothy. The price, £15, annoyed and repelled me, but in the end I yielded to the d . . . d thing and bought it. Dorothy called for me at the Club, and at

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APRIL 12-APRIL 29, 1928

3.50 I began to write my sketch for the film-story. It was interrupted by a grand nursery-tea, this being Virginia's second birthday. It was all over at 5.30, after which I finished all the preliminary part of my film story. I hope to write the actual sequence of events to-morrow morning.

Saturday, April 14th.

I had a bad night, very, but I was determined to write the story of the film for Dupont, and I wrote practically all day. I never went out of the house till night, and didn't dress until I dressed for dinner. I finished the thing by about 5.30.

Friday, April 20th

I walked to Dr. Griffin's to have my heart examined. He told me he had "no fault whatever to find" with my heart. Also that my arteries were those of a man of 40, and my blood pressure just a trifle below normal. I had this examination solely to satisfy Dorothy.

Monday, April 23rd.

I went out, and in Hyde Park I met W. J. Turner. He said that life could and did "maim" a man. I replied: "Very rarely." I said that it was well to remember that nothing happened to a man outside his own head, and that therefore if the mind was under control, etc., etc. I left him suddenly, saying that though apparently idle I was busy working. I got back home at 11.40 and began Act III of my play, and by 12.50 had written quite a lot.

Sunday, April 29th.

I wore my new house-suit from Sulka's. As I wanted to wear it all morning, I decided not to go out. It is so magnificent that I felt rather shy about showing it to the nurses. However they gave no sign of stupefaction. I wrote my *Evening Standard* article, finishing it at just 1 o'clock; but before that I had done chores. Virginia came down to lunch with me. I am told that Virginia now strongly objects to being put in her pen. She made a fantastic noise this morning. I read "Le Collier de la Reine", and pieces of Woodforde's "Diary of a Parson", given to me by Humphrey Milford of the Oxford University Press. I dressed and went out. Sat in the Park

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a bit, and listened to the band under Charles Godfrey. Then I walked on to the Park orators. Socialist and Anti-Socialist. The Socialist was the best; he held his audience and made me laugh. Salvation Army lass preaching Jesus. Awful. A speaker of the "Catholic Evidence" society. Large crowds at each pulpit. I walked back, and read the typescript of a Biblical novel by a dissenting parson in Somerset. His claim on me was that he had once been stationed in Tunstall. The book is worthless. I wrote to him at once, more or less to that effect. Then I read my Third Act. I couldn't judge it fairly, because when you have read a bad thing, anything that you read immediately afterwards always seems to be bad. I drove to Victoria to meet Dorothy's train, which was 25 minutes late.

Wednesday, May 2nd.

Very little doing to-day. I got some ideas in the morning, walking to Piccadilly. I saw an exhibition of 1860 "Art" (costume) at 18, Cork Street. Not good. Then to the Retrospective Exhibition of the London Group in Burlington Gardens (I lent 4 pictures to this show). It had considerable interest. Lunch at the Reform with Gardiner, Page, Leif Jones, Hedley, etc.

Monday, May 7th.

Board Meeting of Pugh's Film Enterprises, Ltd. Hoyt, the film producer, was really most enthusiastic about my novels as subjects for films. He said that "The Grand Babylon Hotel" was absolutely perfect for the film.

Saturday, May 12th.

I wanted some tea, so I went out with the *Manchester Guardian* and had two cups of China at the Express Dairy in King's Road. I like that place; it is rather romantic for me.

Sinclair Lewis, his bride-to-be (on Monday) Miss Thompson, and Harriet Cohen came to dinner. Stayed till 12.25. We had a fine time. Sinclair did too many imitations.

Tuesday, May 15th.

Hannen Swaffer came to see me about myself at 11.30, but he talked almost wholly about himself. I wrote a lot of my film. Board meeting of Film Enterprises, Ltd.

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MAY 2-JUNE 5, 1928

Thursday, May 17th.

I asked Crosby Gaige to lunch at the Yacht Club. We decided that he should issue between 30 and 40,000 words from the first volume of my journal, and terms were fixed. I went out for a walk to get ideas for my next film scene and didn't get them. Newman Flower came to tea.

Tuesday, May 22nd.

I wrote another 2,700 words of my film, at terrific speed. I had two promenades. Aldous Huxley came for lunch.

Thursday, May 24th.

Finished the whole film story, just under 17,000 words, at 12.30. I began a fortnight ago exactly. This has been the most strenuous fortnight I've had for years.

Wednesday, May 30th.

I began my *Daily News* article "Where are the Dead?"¹ at 10.30 and finished it about noon. 1,000 words.

Dined with Thorpe and Dupont at Savoy Grill. They were *extremely* enthusiastic about my film, which is to be called "Piccadilly".

Monday, June 4th.

I worked in the morning on proofs and instructions concerning my Mediterranean book. Good sleep after lunch. I went on with work on the Mediterranean book. At last decided on a title for the book, "Mediterranean Scenes".² Then I finished up the proofs, illustrations, etc.

I've been reading "Endymion". Opening too descriptive and too *generally* narrative, not *individual* enough in event and description. But it can be read.

Tuesday, June 5th.

Pauline Smith came at 3 and we drove down to Dulwich Gallery. Curious semi-sylvan surroundings. Only three or four people in it. An old servitor at the gate. You have to sign your name

¹ Reprinted in the volume published under that title. Among other contributors were Dean Inge, Sir Oliver Lodge, G. K. Chesterton, Prof. Julian Huxley, and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

² This was published in a limited edition of 1,000 copies.

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in a book. A few very fine pictures, especially a Watteau, a Velasquez, and a Murillo. Also the place almost makes you like Cuyper. Some of the famous Poussins are not fearfully good. But two are. What a waste to have this gallery in Dulwich.

Wednesday, June 13th.

I was at the Memorial Service to Dennis Eadie at St. Martin in the Fields at 12.30. Sat with Mason and Miss Stevens. Then Viola Tree drove me to the Garrick Club so that I could see Gerald du Maurier about my (Faust) play.¹ Gerald offered to accept my play without seeing it. I refused the offer; but promised to do the play as quickly as I could.

Saturday, June 16th.

I messed about in the morning and went to South Kensington Museum; but I did not get any good ideas for my last act. Kitty Roberts and Dorothy and I played tennis in the Square² from 12.15 to 1.15. Cynthia Noble came for lunch. Then I had a heavy sleep. I started out for a walk to get ideas but felt too tired and read "La Princesse de Clèves", which has the classic feel.

Eugene Goossens and Alick Shepeler came for dinner. Eugene began to play and sing our opera "Judith". He has evidently set out to do something not too incomprehensible. Better than I had expected. Dramatic. Effective. My libretto seemed quite good. He talked of a production at Covent Garden next year.

A young girl from Liverpool called yesterday afternoon, with a packet which an uncle in Peking had charged her to deliver to me personally. So she had come from Liverpool on purpose, though some weeks ago I had told her she mustn't. She seemed resentful against her uncle; said she knew nothing about the matter and couldn't understand her uncle. I opened the packet. It contained simply the documents of a British government official at Peking deeply possessed of a grievance about being dismissed from the Salt Administration, and an appeal to me to see that Justice was done. Pathetic.

Monday, June 18th.

I proceeded with the play. I don't feel convinced of its

¹ This was "The Return Journey."

² Cadogan Square.

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JUNE 13-JULY 6, 1928

excellence as a show for a large public. And I really doubt whether I will ever do another. Career as a dramatist closing!

Wednesday, June 20th.

I went to the Spender dinner at the Reform Club. Hugh Bell and John Simon spoke briefly and badly. Walter Runciman spoke briefly and very well, and Spender made a very excellent and rather long discourse on America. Old Sir Walter Runciman then, by request, began to sing sea-chanties.

Thursday, June 21st.

I finished writing the (unnamed) play on the Faust theme about 11 a.m. I was very exhausted. Lucas came to lunch, and was rather sardonic and very witty.

Thursday, June 28th.

I walked to Garrick Club to see Gerald du Maurier, who at once told me that he accepted with enthusiasm my unnamed "Faust" play, and would produce it in August. I then joined Alfred Sutro's luncheon at the Garrick: Mrs. Vaughan, Duckworth, Sybil Colefax, Gerhardi, Violet Woodhouse, Laura Cowie, and Edwin Lutyens. Then 500 words of my article. I also finished correcting the proofs of "Accident".

We had a dinner party: Dwight Fiske (old friend of D.'s), Viola Tree, the Herberts, Jeanne de Casalis, and Leigh Ashton. A brother of Herbert's came in later. Then Sybil Colefax. Then at 12.30 or so Diana Cooper and Maurice Baring. The last two left at about 1.30. Great larks.

Hotel Westminster, Le Touquet, Saturday, June 30th.

Dorothy and I left Victoria at 9 a.m. Arrived at Etaples for Le Touquet at 2.43 instead of 1.30. Drove in the Westminster Hotel omnibus about the wastes of sands of the north end of Le Touquet Paris Plage to find our villa, and ultimately found it.

Villa Ma Coquille, Le Touquet, Thursday, July 5th.

The Swinnertons left Etaples and installed themselves at the Hotel Metropole close by here.

75, Cadogan Square, Friday, July 6th.

I went to London at du Maurier's urgent request, by 11.35

boat. I was at St. James's Theatre at 4 and saw Gilbert Miller, du Maurier not being there. They wanted a change at the end of Act II of play. I got home at 6. I went to see Gerald after show at St. James's. The dressing-room full, including Tallulah Bankhead and Hunter (the tennis player). At something after 12 Gerald and his daughter and I went by appointment to a supper party at Viola Tree's, where were Ivor Novello, Bobby Andrews, Lady du Maurier, and both her daughters. Gerald and I had some talk in another room. He wanted a character altered (and complicated). I refused.

Villa Ma Coquille, Le Touquet, Saturday, July 7th.

I had written a new scheme for end of Act II of play before 10 a.m. Julian Huxley called to see me about a new magazine at 10.20. I was at St. James's Theatre at 11.30 and had a full palaver with Gilbert Miller and Gerald and arranged to alter end of Act II at once, definitely.

Sunday, July 8th.

I worked off and on all day in altering Act II of play, and finished it at 6 p.m. I had had a thinking-walk, two miles on beach, in the morning, and I walked again after 6 p.m. After dinner Dorothy and I went to see the film "Casanova" at the Casino de la Plage. It was rotten.

Monday, July 9th.

At 10.30 we went off in our car, with the Swinnertons in a hired car, to Amiens. We went through Abbeville and Picquigny. No possible restaurant at Picquigny, or at Ailly—nothing indeed between Abbeville and Amiens. Relative barbarism of French provincial towns (*pavé*, etc., dullness). We had a fine lunch at the Petit Vatel. Rather disappointed with the Cathedral—except the West Front. Some lovely bits of architecture in the town. We came home via Doullens and Frévent—war country.

Friday, July 13th.

We drove over to Hardelot (Pré-Catalan) about half a mile inland, for dinner. First we saw Hardelot Plage itself. A small place, with one hotel and many villas, all packed together, like a town. Fine sands, otherwise awful. The dust on all



ARNOLD BENNETT, ALDOUS HUXLEY, AND DOROTHY CHESTON BENNETT AT CORTINA, 1927



ARNOLD BENNETT AND DOROTHY CHESTON BENNETT WITH VIRGINIA MARY ON THE SANDS AT LE TOUQUET

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JULY 7-JULY 23, 1928

the roads, including those through the forest, was blinding, and choking. I wouldn't stay at Hardelet for quite a lot of money. We dined in the large garden at the Pré-Catalan farm—sort of restaurant. Plain but excellent. We got home about 10.30.

Sunday, July 15th.

Dorothy and I drove off to the races. Just a nice crowd, with a few *chic* women. Dorothy gambled and I joined her and we lost 350 francs between us. But we forgot to collect a won bet at the end. Otherwise we should have lost under 300 francs. Small sum, but I hate losing; it makes me depressed. The absence of a noisy crowd of bookmakers makes a French race meeting strangely agreeable. We didn't see a single person who was obviously a scoundrel. A modiste brought a hat at 9 p.m., and this the Sunday after the biggest fête of the year! Imagine such a call in England!

Monday, July 16th.

I finished my *Evening Standard* article and finished also the revision of Dorothy's translation of Bourdet's play "Vient de Paraître" in the morning; and then walked to the beach. I walked up to the fashionable Le Touquet at 6 p.m. and bought a book "Lucienne" by Jules Romain. My serial "Train de Luxe" ("Accident") began in the *Daily Express* to-day. Not badly presented.

Wednesday, July 18th.

I finished re-reading "Mansfield Park". This is a fine novel. One or two pages of Zola's or rather Huysman's realism in it. Also at the end she refrains from killing Edmund's elder brother so that Edmund may come into the money, and the title.

75, Cadogan Square, Thursday, July 19th.

I went to London by 11.35 boat. Went to St. James's Theatre direct for rehearsal of play. Till 6 p.m. Then to Reform Club to read and rest. Viola Tree dined with me at Savoy Grill to discuss clothes, etc., for play.

Villa Ma Coquille, Le Touquet, Monday, July 23rd.

It took me a long time to do my correspondence, after London visit. I walked down to the beach. Some wind there. Visitors

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increasing. Kites more and better. After lunch and sleep I went down to the beach again.

Tuesday, July 24th.

After dinner, I began to re-read Baudelaire. I was much struck in Baudelaire by the recurrence of the word "*ennui*". In one place he says that it is the child of "incuriosity". Something in this, but not everything. I am apt to get bored here myself sometimes; sitting on the beach in a wind for instance, watching the wickedness of Virginia for instance. She has a complex which often prevents her from doing what she really wants to do. One of her most-used words is "No! No!" used with apparently the deepest conviction, when asked to do something which she wants to do. I have two desires here. One is to perambulate, and eat in, the fashionable (forest) part of the town, and the other is to go for excursions (of which there are not many). What I enjoy most is lounging about in my dressing-gown after breakfast, smoking a cigar, talking to Dorothy and others.

Grand Hotel, Le Touquet, Saturday, August 4th.

I spent most of the morning in the bar of the Restaurant de la Forêt, writing letters. We lunched with Robert Horne at the Hermitage. A Mrs. Christie (Toronto) was the fourth. Tea with Lili d'Alvarez at Westminster. She seems to be living a secret intellectual life, and writing a book on the world, time, space, etc. An egoist. Attractive, young.

Monday, August 6th.

I finished my *Standard* article in the morning. Then messing about and to beach. Reading. Down to beach, where Virginia, while really wanting to bathe, protested against bathing, though Dorothy and nurse were with her. Then Dorothy went off driving and I walked up to the tennis club to see d'Alvarez, Ryan, Norman Brookes and another play a friendly match. After that the two women played the two men and beat them. Dorothy and I dined here. Then to the gaming rooms, where I met Gilbert Miller, Hore-Belisha and others, and Dorothy had a long lesson in baccarat from Robert Horne. Horne, Dorothy and I drank and talked. Horne had been to Paris this day for a Board Meeting of the Suez Canal, and back,

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JULY 24-AUGUST 15, 1928

leaving Le Touquet at 7 a.m. And yet he seemed quite fresh at 1.30 a.m. Dorothy and I walked home.

Tuesday, August 7th.

I read Coward's play "The Queen was in the Parlour" and had already begun to think about the preface which I had promised to write for a volume of this and two other plays. Then we all drove off to have a picnic tea in the woods.

Monday, August 13th.

Felt as if I had a serious chill (but I hadn't). I stayed in bed nearly all morning. Just walked out to look at the sea and buy cigarettes. I passed casually into the boule room and made 1,000 francs net which I took away complete. We had a rendezvous with Lili d'Alvarez and her young man at 6.30 for cocktails and port in the Restaurant de la Forêt, and we talked for 1½ hours.

75, Cadogan Square, Tuesday, August 14th.

We left the Grand Hotel, Le Touquet, at 9.55 and reached No. 75 at 3.45 p.m. Comfortable journey throughout. The purser fellow on the boat got us through the Customs without examination and saw to all other arrangements. All because I gave him an autographed book. I daren't give him a tip. Infant in perfect form, and a very good traveller. Immediately on arrival I set to work to clear up things, and before I went to bed had done four hours' concentrated work. Also I had searched Bible and Shakspeare concordances for a title for the play.

Wednesday, August 15th.

I walked all the way to the Garrick Club for lunch; hot, close, sunny day; 2½ miles and I really felt no fatigue whatever. Talked to Pinero. He came up and asked me how my rehearsals were going on. I said I hated rehearsals, dealing with a lot of hypersensitive and sometimes conceited persons; watching what they did, etc. Pinero said: "Yes, and watching what they don't do, and you want 'em to do, and what they leave out." Pinero is the most charming old man I know. Met Marie Tempest and spouse in a car just outside the Club. She asked me to go and see her in the new play. Another charmer, but capable of ferocity.

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Thursday, August 16th.

I am reading Lawrence's "Lady Chatterley's Lover". He is the most original novelist now writing, except James Joyce.

Sunday, August 19th.

Alfred Mason called for us in his car at 10.30, and at 10.45 we set off for Aldwick (Diana Cooper's), his car following ours. We found Maurice Baring in the garden; then Diana's mother, the Duchess of Rutland. At lunch there were only these and we and the host and hostess. Duff Cooper turns out to be a very considerable reader. It was a good gossiping, scandal-talking, literature-discussing lunch, which lasted till after 3. A number of younger cousins and things came in after lunch and sat on cushions on the small lawn, and people tried to remember the first lines of Shakspeare's plays. Diana and Maurice were very good at this.

Monday, August 20th.

I wrote pieces of an article. Lunch at home. I felt drowsy after it, and so went to the romantic Express Dairy in King's Road and had some China tea. Came back in a shower, and by 4.30 had finished my article. We dined at home and then, Dorothy having a sudden desire to see a film, we went and saw Douglas Fairbanks's "The Gaucho". Vast house, quite full—a wonderful sight. Goodish film on its pseudo-romantic plane. Fairbanks really admirable. On the whole tolerable.

Tuesday, August 21st.

During the morning I put down 11 titles for the play, and in the end everyone agreed on one title "The Return Journey". Whereupon this title was officially given out to Louis Nether-sole the press-agent. The rehearsals went quite well: three acts out of four nearly done. I gave lunch to Gerald at the Green Park. He insists on a particular cocktail, anchovies, cold roast beef, no sweet, no cheese, beer, and a couple of ports, and then goes off and works again like the devil.

Friday, August 24th.

Rehearsal all day. I made enormous cuts in last Act, which went much better. I think the play will be rather short. I

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AUGUST 16-SEPTEMBER 1, 1928

went alone to lunch at the Garrick, and saw James Douglas and Chartres Biron together in the lounge, so I set violently on Jimmy at once about his attack on Radcliffe Hall's sapphic novel. Jimmy was very quiet and restrained but Biron defended Jimmy with *real* heat; so I went on attacking. I told Jimmy to come in and lunch with me. He did. He said there was an imp in me. We dined at home and then Dorothy worked and I read. Bed early.

I got and began to read Freud's pamphlet about religion and H. G. Wells's new book.

Saturday, August 25th.

Rehearsals at St. James's Theatre all day. I walked to the theatre, trying to think of my religious book,¹ and failing.

We dined with Lionel Feilding (of the B.B.C.) to meet Thornton Wilder, who came with his sister (a theatre enthusiast 'qualifying' in U.S.A. as a 'director'). André Maurois and wife arrived late. Edith Evans was to come, but didn't turn up at all. Wilder, a nice modest dark young man, had to go off for 20 minutes to broadcast.

Wednesday, August 29th.

Walked to Garrick Club and lunch with Chartres Biron, Sutro, and Jacobs. Jacobs very witty. Rehearsal (dress) at 2.30. At 7.30 I dressed at the theatre (rehearsal still going on) and dined at Piccadilly as guest of Harry Preston and sat next to Gene Tunney, the guest of honour. About thirty people. He is agreeable to talk to. But dull at first. He made a good speech, but too long.

Saturday, September 1st.

I walked to the St. James's Theatre² but seeing a crowd still in front, I walked round St. James's parish for a bit, and entered the stage door at 11.27. I found Gerald du M. alone in his dressing-room. He seemed fairly content, but not enthusiastic at all, about the reception. Reception on the stage, champagne, etc.

¹ For the Bishop of Liverpool's Affirmation series, see p. 228.

² This was the first night of "The Return Journey".

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Monday, September 3rd.

After chores I reached the St. James's Theatre at 11 a.m. Everyone was pretty gloomy, except me. They pretend to despise critics but they attach extraordinary importance to everything the critics say. Gilbert Miller was cheerful, and he and I upraised these spirits. By 5 p.m. they were quite cheerful, and dreaming of an "enormous success"; and so on. I was on the stage for six hours during the day, making minor alterations, and changing the business at the end of the last act, and rehearsing the same.

Train between Paris and Aix les Bains, Tuesday, September 4th.

We left Victoria for Annecy at 2 p.m. In the French train Dorothy and I discussed my "Punch and Judy" film at some length.

Imperial Palace Hotel, Annecy, Wednesday, September 5th.

We got to Annecy half an hour late. First impressions very agreeable. Situation of hotel on lake very agreeable. Hotel *sympathique*. But the great shadow lay over us of our big baggage not having turned up—for it hadn't turned up. Discussions. Telegrams and things. Also I had left my eyeglasses in the bed in the train. I telegraphed to Rome instantly about these. When we came down to dinner the luggage had mysteriously come. My original theory that the delay had had nothing to do with the Customs and that the stuff had merely missed the train at Paris was confirmed. I began to read Plutarch's life of Alexander the Great. Good stuff.

Thursday, September 6th.

Too idle to shave myself. I employed the hotel barber, who had little to say, even about the weather. D. and I reflected upon my next film till 11.15. Lunch a bit late, and then we dashed off in a taxi to catch the 2.10 steamer *France* for the *tour du lac*. There are one or two fine mountains in full view (7,000 ft. or so) but I found it impossible to be enthusiastic about lake scenery. It is like living in a picture postcard, especially when there is full sunshine. The steamer calls at all sorts of places, little places. Menthon was the best. We

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SEPTEMBER 3-SEPTEMBER 8, 1928

stepped off at Duingt because Noel Coward had given such an enthusiastic account of it to Dorothy. Not bad, but suffering from the disadvantage of being seriously cut off by hills from the sun both east and west. Noel must have been there in love, some hot August. After tea, we climbed a little way up the hill below the church and sat, and I made a slight sketch of a lake-and-mountain composition (the first interesting one I had seen). Then another steamer back, arriving at 6.30 at Annecy. I then reflected for one hour on my film and I got a real notion or two. After dinner I read about 50 pages of Keyserling's "Europe". I was prepared to disdain it, but did not utterly.

Friday, September 7th.

We drove into Chambéry. Not very good scenery. Chambéry *est très sympathique*. We began by going into the Chapel of the Dukes of Savoy in mistake for the Cathedral. The arcaded street is good architecture and unspoilt. Rousseau must have seen it just like that, and the people the same too—except for their clothes. Provincial ceremoniousness when friends meet on footpath. I doubt if you could see it in England. A rather 'petty' people, I thought; but naturally so. How could they be otherwise? We liked it all. The cathedral itself is not much, roof good—Genoese-decorated walls not good. But it is nice and small, and one has a pleasant change from big cathedrals. The elephant fountain is not *sympathique*. Quantities of old architecture, corners, squares, little old shops. We came back by the mountain route, etc. Very fine scenery, good roads, full of hairpin turns; vast vision of a wall of cloud (and a rainbow above it or in it) hiding the highest mountain. Scarcely were we reposing in our rooms than there was outcry at Dorothy's door. "Afraid you've made a mistake," said Dorothy. "No I haven't," said a voice. "Arnold. Dorothy." I then recognised Diana Cooper's voice. She had just arrived from Chambéry.

Saturday, September 8th.

This was our hottest day so far. I began a rough preliminary sketch of my new film and I did about a third of it in the morning before a bathe. We bathed with Diana Cooper, Lady Horner, who had her two granddaughters, Lady Helen and

Lady Perdita Asquith, in the water with her, and the boy, Lord Oxford. I talked to the old lady while on the raft. The Diana-Horner party went off to lunch at Talloires. Duff Cooper had arrived in the early afternoon from Geneva. He and Diana were returning from a rowing excursion (and reading Wells's new novel aloud to one another on the lake) just as Dorothy and I were finishing tea on the terrace.

Monday, September 10th.

Lunch with Duff Cooper and Diana at the Restaurant du Parc des Eaux Vives, Geneva. Apparently Geneva is 'full'. Flags of strange new designs, of new nations, hanging about on all the big hotels. At the Beauvillage the clientèle seems to be rather earnest, movement-y, and narrow-minded. The other guest at the luncheon was a middle-aged Italian *flâneur*, named Piacci (or some such name) who knew everybody in Italy, Belgium, France, Switzerland and England (except Beaverbrook, whom he thought was a brother of Rothermere). He is a type one meets in Paris; apparently kindly, broad-minded, a bit cynical, with no ambition. Friend of many authors, statesmen, princesses, etc. The Queen of Belgium had done his portrait three times. Ojetti has written his portrait in "Cose Viste", etc., etc. A good talker, but a bit too much of a solo performer. Still it was all very good.

We then drove to the hotel and Dorothy and I walked back to the Hall of the League of Nations for the afternoon session. It is a biggish hall, absolutely awful acoustics, in the ex-Hotel Victoria. Atmosphere (mental) rather like the House of Commons. Physical atmosphere simply terrible; hot, stuffy, odorous of people in the *première galerie*, for which Duff had got us tickets. Briand had orated in the morning, and they all said it was *marvellous*. But in the afternoon we saw nothing *marvellous*. We saw him record his vote—he is now a hunchback—on the admission of new nations to the Council. These were Persia, Venezuela—I forget the third. This business of voting on new admissions took a long time. Before that there had been statements about new rules. At the end of the declaration of the vote, the Chairman declared an interval of ten minutes. On the floor of the big Chamber, delegates and secretaries moving about and coming in and going out (especially at the back of the platform) the whole time. My general im-

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SEPTEMBER 10-SEPTEMBER 26, 1928

pression of the League was that something is being done there, despite the appearances of tedium and slackness.

Tuesday, September 11th.

The Keebles entertained us to lunch at the rich and splendid Splendide, Aix les Bains, where was Isidore de Lara, who came to our table and talked to us for a bit.

75, Cadogan Square, Thursday, September 20th.

Dorothy and I went to see my play at the St. James's. Full house. An ordeal. The play seemed to me to be very harrowing. The upper circle and the dress circle liked it better than the stalls, or showed their liking more. We talked to Gerald afterwards in his dressing-room. Bed 12.30. Exhausted. Goodish night last night.

Friday, September 21st.

I walked about and got ideas for "God" book. I wrote a lot of them before lunch. Wells came for lunch: his 62nd birthday. Dorothy arrived late for lunch, but with a gardenia for him. Agreeable lunch. He left before 3.

Monday, September 24th.

I walked to the Garrick to lunch with Maurice Marston, who explained to me his new "Readers' Guide" scheme (on behalf of the National Book Council) for selling more books. He wanted me to boom it. I said I would. Young Hamilton (of Harpers) wanted me to be chief judge of a novel competition arranged jointly by Jonathan Cape and Harpers. There would be six MS. novels to read. I refused; quite apart from the money. The money was £100—for at least six days' work, hard and tedious, and all the alleged immense *éclat* of my name thrown in. I could earn it in two hours any time.

Wednesday, September 26th.

My ideas for continuation of "God" book being not quite in order, I wanted a romantic change, and went off by Underground eastwards and got off at the Monument, and walked about the City for an hour, and came home through Holborn in a 22 bus. The City is continually changing architecturally, growing grander and more ornamental; and banks seem to

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be increasing their premises more and more. The City is a symbol of the domination of the banks. Expense has not been spared in financial architecture in the City. There is grandeur, despite the lack of space.

I have at last finished D. H. Lawrence's "Lady Chatterley's Lover". It is *foncièrement* indecent, but not pornographic. Some of it is very good, and some awful in dryness. Generally speaking, the lechery scenes are the best.

Thursday, September 27th.

Lunch at the Reform. H. G. Wells came upstairs later and Gardiner being rather boastful I offered to play him a tennis match on the hard court in Cadogan Square for a quid. He took it on. He also offered to play Wells after he had played me, and Wells took that on too. The matches are to take place on Wednesday at 3.

Friday, September 28th.

Noel Coward telephoned he couldn't come to lunch. Reginald Turner telephoned he was in bed with a cold and couldn't come to lunch so that only the Bernard Shaws and Jeanne de Casalis came. This lunch was very successful and Shaw was in better form than I have seen him for a long time past. Charlotte Shaw plays the rôle of the super-celebrity's wife with much tact.

We went off to see Van Druten's new play at the Arts Theatre Club. Not bad. Hectic. Forced. Rather sentimental—with good scenes. Cathleen Nesbitt and one or two others very good. Dorothy drove home and I went to see du Maurier at the St. James's Theatre.

Saturday, September 29th.

Charles Lughton came by appointment at 10.40 (for 10.30) to consult me about his most private affairs. He stayed till 12. He would have left earlier but I wouldn't let him. Towards the end he said he wanted to play Shakspeare. He said little on this subject but what he said was good.

Tuesday, October 2nd.

I walked three miles round Battersea and Beaufort St. to get my ideas for the next section of the religious booklet. I got

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them and began at once to write. Noel Coward and Jeanne de Casalis and her father and mother came to lunch. Noel was in the greatest form. Papa de Casalis was a good and lively talker and arguer. Jeanne was appropriately daughterly in the presence of her parents, and the lunch was a great success.

R. Wednesday, October 3rd.

I walked three miles around Battersea Park, forgetting that I had to play tennis in the afternoon, and came home and worked on the penultimate section of my religious booklet. Preparations for tennis with Gardiner and H. G. Wells in Square. Gardiner came shortly after 3 and Wells a little before his appointed time, 3.30. Both middle-aged, grave, jocular, voluble. They changed their clothes up in my room. Our ages, A. G. G. 63, H. G. W. 62, and me 61. I beat Gardiner 6-5, and then he thought he should only play one set with me as he had to play Wells. He beat Wells 6-2. He then played Wells again and beat him 6-2. The last was only a fun set. I was told that there was betting at the Club—all against me. I took £1 off Gardiner and Gardiner took £1 off Wells. A man had been sitting on a bench watching us throughout the games. At the end he came up to us. He was a *Daily Mail* man. In the morning the *Mail* had telephoned me to allow a photographer to come down and take us at tennis. I said no. I don't know how the news of the great match reached the *Mail*.

Thursday, October 4th.

I finished my religious booklet after tea, having worked on it in the morning also. To the new Embassy Theatre (Swiss Cottage) to meet the Shaws and to see a play, in which Jeanne de Casalis was playing. Jeanne was fine. We saw her afterwards in her dressing-room.

Monday, October 15th.

I did nothing but chores in the morning. Then a short walk, when I got an idea for a short story or rather I had the idea before but I worked it out into characters.

Thursday, October 18th.

Enfeebled after neuralgia, and bad night. I did little in the

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morning, except prepare. Then, though still very neuralgic, I wrote 600 words of short story.

We arrived last at Sybil Colefax's dinner. Margaret Kennedy and husband, Desmond McCarthy and wife, Oliver Brett and wife, Rudolf Kommer and Anita Loos,—charming. I had neuralgia and was silent and indiscreetly talkative by turns.

Friday, October 19th.

I wrote 1,000 words of short story before noon. I then walked two miles and then drove to the Garrick Club, where du Maurier lunched with me. He practically wanted me to rewrite Acts II and III of "The Return Journey". I told him I couldn't, but gave him leave to fool around with the play.

We reached the Ravel Concert at the Aeolian Hall 20 minutes late, and Ravel himself came into the vestibule. We talked a bit.¹ This concert was extremely satisfactory. It seemed to me to be *all* good music.

Saturday, October 20th.

I spent most of the morning out of doors, down Battersea way, railways with streets down each side of them, and signal box coming out across pavement, and so on. Three big lines crossing over or under one another. Smuts, steam, noise. Heavy shower as I was getting home. I had my ideas in order. I wrote 1,100 words of my story during the afternoon.

Tuesday, October 30th.

I went alone to "The Prince of Darkness", arranged by the Tolstoy Society. Rotten but earnest production. Sad spectacle of third-rate West End actors with their West End voices trying to play Russian peasants. Pathetic. Comic. Yet the play came through as a majestic and vast work. No wonder it has been played all over Europe. It goes so largely and so smoothly that you can't easily find any fault with it. I talked with Aylmer Maude, J. T. Grein, etc.

Thursday, November 1st.

I walked out in the morning—Chelsea Embankment, and got a few ideas for completing a scene of "Punch and Judy", and finished the scene before lunch. With Dorothy to Eliz. Lewis's

¹ They were old friends from Bennett's Paris days. See Vol. I.

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(now Wansborough's) wedding reception at Bryanston Square. Father dead¹; mother in a nursing home—brother educating in Germany. What a sadness! Crowds of people. I talked to lots and embraced several. I left just after the bride and bridegroom, and walked to Yacht Club and thought. Then to South Kensington museum and thought. Then home and thought. But didn't get my next scene absolutely clear after all.

Friday, November 2nd.

Worried by my film "Punch and Judy", I walked out for an hour and got ideas and came back and wrote another scene. Then at 2.15 I drove in a studio car to Elstree to see some shooting of the "Piccadilly" film. Full crowd. 300 guests in the famous club. The colouring of the dresses was not at all distinguished; but this doesn't matter on the screen. Each item was filmed five or six times. Endless trouble taken. Considerable heat from *terrific* blaze of electric lamps. I talked with Gilda Gray. The Denison Rosses, the Colefaxes, Muriel Foster, Humbert Wolfe, and H. G. Wells came to dinner and the uproariousness of the whole evening was terrific.

Monday, November 5th.

Took one of the new 6-wheel buses, just to try it, to the Ritz, and walked up Bond Street to the Queen's Hall to look at programmes.

At 3 p.m. I was at the Board Meeting of the *New Statesman* to discuss scheme for getting a push on sales. I promised to write a booklet, to sign it, and to find £200 towards the outlay required for the push, such sum and any further sums to have a prior claim on previous loans.

Wednesday, November 7th.

I went by bus to the Embassy Club to lunch with Harry Preston; Marconi, Harry McGowan, Humphrey de Trafford, Lord Knebworth (boxer), Beverley Baxter, and Charles Graves (*Daily Mail* gossip man). I sat next to Marconi. A quiet man, without a lot to say.

Inspected Victoria Station at 6.30 and the surroundings.

Saturday, November 10th.

I walked three miles to get ideas and didn't get them. Julian

¹ Sir George Lewis died 8th August, 1927.

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Huxley and Professor Church came to see me at noon about their proposed magazine *The Realist*, and I poured wisdom into them, of which they were very receptive, for one hour.

I saw the Quintero Brothers' little piece in three scenes, "Fortunata", at the Court, with O. B. Clarence in the principal rôle. I went to see this because Dorothy had praised it so lightly. A very good, picturesque little comedy, and well played. I met A. P. Herbert there. The remainder of the afternoon I chiefly wasted—I think because I had felt a chill going out in the wet to the theatre. Henry Williamson, author of "The Pathway", came to dinner. I'd never seen him before. 32, dark. Highly strung. Bit by bit we got on better and better, and he left at 11.15 much touched by the contact. I liked him. Married. Two children. Seems to be very fond of his wife, and admires her. She is the original of "Mary" in "The Pathway"; so she must be fine. He told me lots of autobiography.

Sunday, November 11th.

I read the "Memoirs of Max of Baden", and learned something about Germany in the war. Then to Stornoway House to dine with Beaverbrook. Dean Inge and wife, Churchill and McKenna were the other guests. The gloomy dean was not at all gloomy. In argument on finance McKenna knocked Churchill to bits. We all went to the Armistice Festival organised by the *Express* at the Albert Hall; we had the box next to King, Queen, and Co. This affair was very impressive indeed.

The financial debate between the Chancellor and the ex-Chancellor was very diverting. I left at midnight. I enjoyed this evening. It woke me up.

Wednesday, November 14th.

I wrote more of "Punch and Judy". Then walked to the Reform Club, round by Piccadilly Circus. I met Paul Nash in Coventry Street, and he told me about the case of C., an author (esteemed by Galsworthy) on his beam-ends, to the fund for whom I subscribed last week through Nash. Nash is a kindly fellow. Then I corrected over 60 pages of the pianoforte score of the new Goossen's Opera "Judith". Lots of errors in the text. Then Dr. Griffin called to see me, so that I could get from him medical details for "Punch and Judy".

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NOVEMBER 11-NOVEMBER 24, 1928

To the Lyric, Hammersmith, where there was a great course of cars, to see "The Critic" and A. P. Herbert's "Two Gentlemen of Soho". "The Critic" wears very well and Playfair has produced it quite well. A. P. Herbert's little piece (30 minutes' play) has little or no dramatic quality, but very many marvellously funny lines—in fact many as good as Sheridan's.

Sunday, November 18th.

Michael Arlen and wife and William Gerhardi came to lunch; all stayed till 3.15, and Gerhardi stayed till 3.40. I liked Mrs. Arlen. If she doesn't see a joke she doesn't pretend to see it and doesn't laugh. She speaks very fluent and correct English, with an accent. Arlen was full of common sense. After tea, I read the whole of a play called "Byron", author unnamed, in which Gwladys Wheeler, who is doing a theatrical season with Esmé Percy, wants Dorothy to play Lady Byron. This took me nearly two hours. I also read a lot of Lermontov. Dinner and evening with Dorothy.

Wednesday, November 21st.

1st night of Quintero's play "100 Years Old" at Hammersmith. Lovely 1st Act. Other acts not so good. Then we all four went to Dorothy Warren's and Philip Trotter's pre-nuptial supper at Boulestin's. About 200 I should think. I sat next to Lady Raleigh and opposite the betrothed couple, Anna May Wong and Harold Baker. Got home in taxi at about 1.30. Good evening.

Saturday, November 24th.

I began to read Zweig's "The Case of Sergeant Grischa". Goodish and good and sometimes very good; but marred by too much allusiveness and periphrasis, and by confused, overcharged writing. Then we went to see O'Neill's "All God's Chillun" at the Gate Theatre. Packed. First act sentimental, patchy, and not clear. Second Act (in three scenes—the 1st act was in four) very much better, and the last scene of it very good, and rather moving. This is the best bit of O'Neill that I have seen, and rather alters my opinion of him. I was almost tragically, fatally, exhausted. I can't remember ever having felt more exhausted. I read more of "Grischa".

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Monday, November 26th.

One of the Cartes telephoned me early in the morning that Bertie Sullivan had just died of heart failure. This upset me. At the Garrick Club, where I dined with Duff Tayler, everybody was talking of this death.

Thursday, November 29th.

I read a great deal of Blunden's "Undertones of War". A very fine book.

Friday, November 30th.

We had a lunch. Max Beerbohm (who arrived late), McCarthy (late also), Mrs. Courtauld, Mrs. Lubbock, Lee Mathews and Jeanne de Casalis. Dorothy and Jeanne and Mrs. Courtauld went off to the Copeau performance of Molière at the St. James's. Max Beerbohm and McCarthy and I stayed talking. Beerbohm was very strong against the Russians as a thoroughly inferior race, and he said he simply could not read their novels (except Tolstoy). I think what he objects to is their inefficiency.

I got to the Savoy Grill at 8.30 to meet Dupont, who arrived immediately, and we went through the titles of the Piccadilly film, 2½ hours concentrated work.

Monday, December 3rd.

Walk round Shaftesbury Avenue, etc., to Reform Club to get ideas for "Punch and Judy". I got some, and I got more at the Club between 12.30 and 1. I did a little writing of the film between 5 and 6.30. Dined at home, and we dashed off to see Tallulah Bankhead in "Her Cardboard Lover", a French farce by Duval, anglicised by P. G. Wodehouse and another. This was quite a good boulevard farce in the traditional manner, well played by Tallulah and Leslie Howard. The rest very mediocre. Wodehouse had handled it with some skill. It was nothing at all, of course, excessively old-fashioned; but it was not so very boring. Tallulah has great resource, and so has Leslie Howard. We got home by 11.15, after learning that the King was *slightly* better. Crowds continually in front of the Palace. I read some of J. W. N. Sullivan's "Beethoven", and wasn't much struck by it. Then 100 pages of "Alice in Wonderland". Quite readable, though confined to one set of fanciful invention. Tenniel's pictures very ugly.

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NOVEMBER 26-DECEMBER 16, 1928

Tuesday, December 4th.

I walked by roundabout ways to Garrick Club. *En route* I met and was stopped by four people, including one who didn't know me but thought he would like to be sure that I was I, and an old lady whom I had met once at Monte Carlo about seven years ago for a few minutes.

Geoffrey Russell suggested I should go with him to Bach's B minor Mass at St. Margaret's. I did. I ate oysters with him at the Reform hastily, first. Church full. The whole thing marvellous. It seems that the Mass was not performed for many years after it was written and delivered, and Bach delivered it mainly as a proof to his sovereign that he was fitted for a post of capellmeister! Good performance. The effect was terrific; also uplifting, despite dowdiness of every woman in the congregation.

Monday, December 10th.

Went to see Max Beerbohm's caricatures at the Leicester Galleries. They are just as fine as ever. I bought a caricature of G. B. Shaw, not included in the exhibition, one of the finest Max drawings I ever saw, for 25 guineas. Couldn't resist.

Read Osbert Sitwell's witty book on London statues,¹ read the *Manchester Guardian*, hated to start work, did start, and in 90 minutes had written a chapter of "Punch and Judy"; 1,500 words.

Thursday, December 13th.

I left the house shortly after 11, having said good-bye to Dorothy who was leaving for Brighton by car at 2 p.m. She had to see Bourdet, the author of "Vient de Paraître" at 11.30.

Sunday, December 16th.

Terrific day. The best I have done for years. Nearly 5,000 words. I dined at the Savoy. The millionaire owner of a number of papers came up to me and I didn't know him. I asked him: "Who are you?" He said he wanted some *really* good stuff for X. He said my article in the first issue had done them a great deal of harm, and asked why I had attacked Lloyd George, and L. George wanted to know.

¹ "The People's Album of London Statues."

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Considering that I had not mentioned him, or indicated him in any way, or any other politician, I said that this was a bit thick. I said I didn't know whether I could think of any subjects; I had too much to do. He said he worked harder than I did. I said "You don't!" "Don't?" said he. "Don't," said I. "Don't?" said he. "Don't," said I. I gazed at him. His eye fell.

Tuesday, December 18th.

To-day I finished correcting typescript of "Punch and Judy" film. Geoffrey Russell, F. Swinnerton came to lunch on business; also Elena Sullivan, our first view of her since Bertie's death about three weeks ago. She behaved with Latin calm and dignity. Exactly the right touch.

After lunch I formally gave to Dorothy 47 volumes of my MSS. (34 of Journal, 2 "Old Wives' Tale", 1 "Riceyman Steps", 1 "Elsie", and 9 "Clayhanger Family") in the presence of Miss Nerney, Fred Harvey, Swinnerton and Geoffrey Russell. Roger Fry, Mrs. Anrep, Francis Birrell and the Edes came to dinner. Very good evening. Fry and Birrell were fine.

Monday, December 31st.

This year I have written 304,000 words; 1 play, 2 films, 1 small book on religion, and about 80 or 81 articles. Also I lost a full month in rehearsals, and a full month, no, six weeks, on holidays.

[*This concludes the three volumes of Arnold Bennett's Journals. The volume for 1929 he published, greatly abridged, during his lifetime.*]

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